

PeaceMaker

Anthony of Boston

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Foreword

This book is a compilation of four books written between December of 2021 and September of 2022. It lays out dynamics that led to the war in Ukraine, as well as 4 solutions at four different junctures aimed to solve the problems that were getting in the way of de-escalation. Obviously Ukraine is steadfast in reclaiming its internationally recognized territories, while the rest of the world is divided on the prospect, mainly due to the potential of World War III or a nuclear armageddon that would arise from an all-out war between Russia and NATO, should NATO decide to fight on behalf of Ukraine. While many support Ukraine, others are advocating that Ukraine concede territories to the aggressor.

We can only hope that the civil war in Ukraine as it was before the Russian invasion is not a precursor to the fate of the United States. But one must assume, in light of history, that the excessive promotion of the assertion of ethnic identity--as fundamentally, on all levels, distinct from other demographics within the US--will at some point have a major drawback. This is mainly in regards to Critical Race Theory and Replacement Theory. The reason one should mention these critical race theories is due to how it is relevant to what is happening in Ukraine. Looking back, especially in the 1990s, during the decade that Ukraine had enjoyed independence from Russia, one has to ask how did ethnic Ukrainians and ethnic Russians co-exist? The answer is likely in the fact that while ethnicity was upheld in some aspects, it was still nonetheless largely deprioritized, with much of the population accepting of the dual language/culture aspect there. This can be said for America between the time of Nixon and Obama--while race was still an issue, it was not prioritized to the extent that it has been since 2016. This lack of priority prior to 2016 provided some sense of anonymity regarding the comparative advantage of each demographic and thus quelled the prospect of separatism and radical racial animosity, both of which became an existential threat to the state of Ukraine. The deprioritizing of race is not a component of Critical Race Theory--in fact, quite the opposite, which as a result can lead to catastrophic consequences, if the separatism that often follows complete demographic loss of anonymity also gives way to territorialism. Separatism and division is one thing, territorialism is another. Territorialism is ultimately what led to the civil war in Ukraine in 2014.

All forms of critical theory is a way of looking at the world and observing inequities of distribution amongst the different groups that live within a society. These groups can be observed in terms of race, class, age, gender, nationality, religion, etc. Critical theory studies the power dynamics between groups, identifying how one group may have a lower representation or power in an institution when compared to another group. The group that is identified as having

an over-representation or possessing a higher degree of power in a certain field or industry is believed to be carrying certain biases and assumptions that they may or may not be aware of, but is yet forging these biases into the societal system. Critical theorist seek to expose this bias for the sake of critiquing, examining, or in a more assertive scenario, dismantling and overthrowing. In the Marxist sense of critical theory, which is where critical theory has its origins, the power groups are the capitalists or the bourgeoisie, where the distribution of power, wealth and property is highest. The working class, where this distribution of wealth, property and power is lower, is the exploited class. When society remains stagnant in light of these inequalities, critical theorist contend that the powerful classes are also setting how people should think. Critical Theory examines this dynamic and attempts to fix it—and in the case of Marxism—by introducing discourse in which the workers would control the means to production. Critical Race Theory contends that in America, inequalities that underscore the plight of blacks are embedded into the system and those institutions in which the power, wealth, and property are concentrated to a much higher degree into the hands of white people are further upheld not just by their own biases and assumptions, but by the manner in which the system attempts to get everyone in society to buy into it. By doing this, the system keeps people complacent in their circumstances.

The Nazis applied a form of critical race theory against the Jews in Germany after World War I. A key element of propaganda for the Nazis's pogrom against Jewish people was pointing out how Jews were over-represented in certain industries such as film, theater, journalism and banking. Goebbels states in a speech at the first Nuremberg rally in 1933:

“Is it surprising that the German Revolution also broke this unbearable yoke? When one further considers the alienation of German intellectual life by International Jewry, its corruption of German justice that finally led to the fact that only one out of every five judges was German, the takeover of the medical profession, their predominance among university professors, in short, the fact that nearly all intellectual professions were dominated by the Jews, one has to grant that no people with any self esteem could tolerate that for long. It was only an act of national renewal when the National Socialist revolution took action in this area.

People abroad often do not know the real causes of German Jewish legislation. The statistics are most persuasive.

Nonetheless, we held back at the beginning of our work. We had

more important things to do than to take on a question of such great scope. It is entirely the fault of Jewry that things turned out differently. The boycott and atrocity propaganda they made in other countries was an attempt by International Jewry to accomplish by means of public opinion in other countries what had been made impossible by our takeover in Germany. They attempted to cause difficulties for Germany's rebirth through a worldwide boycott campaign, and to render it ineffective.

We finally resorted to a counter-boycott during that critical period. The fact that their racial comrades still in Germany suffered loss is thanks to their racial comrades beyond our borders, who were trying to cause difficulties for us. They only caused economic difficulties for their own race. We can predict the future consequences for Jewry. We have not done anything to encourage them, they are simply the product of the times. Many clever Jews have already realized what they have done, above all to those remaining in Germany, who were the most directly affected. They shouted their warnings. But they could not overcome the radical wing, and in the end had to let things take their course for better or worse. This radical wing has delivered an extraordinarily hard blow to World Jewry and its allies. They put the Jewish Problem up for debate, and where it is debated the results can only be unpleasant. Jewry's strength is in its anonymity; if it loses that, the results can only be harmful.

Source: "Rassenfrage und Weltpropaganda," Reichstagung in Nürnberg 1933 (Berlin: Vaterländischer Verlag C. A. Weller, 1933), pp. 131-142.

A certain level of anonymity is required for the cohesion of different groups under one system. Under Meritocracy, this anonymity gives way to uneven distributions, but at the same time it protects the individual from falling into a formation that would limit his pursuit of industry. Under Meritocracy, ethnic groups are allowed to have both a comparative advantage and disadvantage. Even blacks in America, in light of their disadvantages, have managed to achieve a comparative advantage in certain industries. And this has to be credited to the meritocracy and color blindness aspect of liberalism. This anonymity is what also led to Jewish advancement in Western Europe in the 19th century. When this anonymity is antagonized or taken away by nationalistic elements within a group, the particular comparative advantage of every group goes on trial. This group points out the comparative advantage of that group and vice versa, and this leads to a chain reaction of sectarianism and isolationism, and finally territorialism which directly precipitates violent conflict. Critical Race Theory, by removing the anonymity factor of liberalism and

Meriocracy sets groups at odds with each other and forces them into self-preservation mode.

Because all this ethnic distinction discourse is so embedded into American life, it is likely that there is no going back to a trajectory of complete meritocracy. Because of this, it becomes important to perhaps slow the trajectory towards territorialism which directly proceeds separatism. Critical Race Theory(CRT) essentially opens the door for separatism. CRT is largely grounded in Critical Theory, which is a philosophical approach, where one undertakes a critical assessment of culture and society and seeks to challenge the outlooks which maintain it. It has its origins in the Frankfurt School theoreticians such as Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Erich Fromm, and Max Horkheimer. Friedrich Nietzsche also applied critical theory to his philosophical approach. Critical Theory seeks to promote a self-determined society that does not enslave itself to mainstream ideologies. Critical Race Theory follows along this same path and would fall under the far left paradigm. If we look at the backdrop of contemporary mainstream American ideology from President Richard Nixon(1969) to President Barack Obama(2016), we can identify a growing trend that gradually attempts to foment a concept into the American psyche, a concept that culminated in the election of President Barack Obama and of which states that race itself be de-prioritized within the public consciousness of Americans. This concept and liberal outlook bred a willingness to accommodate people no matter what they appear in terms of race, as long as everyone agrees that race not be the central focus. This outlook was ceremoniously inducted and glamorized into the public sphere via images and speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, the black civil rights leader who famously spoke of a time when people would be judged by the content of their character as opposed to the color of their skin. While this was never perfected during that era between Nixon and Obama, it was largely held up as the mantle that society strive to carry. This was the paradigm that America strived for. Even most mainstream conservatives had slowly come to adopt a more liberal approach to their conservative outlook over the course of time, gradually asserting it as America's status quo. Then came the extremeist archetypes: The Alternative Right and Critical Race Theorists, who both share a common outlook that believes there is within the development and sustenance of "America" a certain whiteness that goes with it and because of this, blacks will never be able to share in its culture and history, and therefore separation of races is the only solution. Both schools of thought, while opposite in vantage point, are similar in philosophy; basically asserting that liberalism is flawed and should be replaced with something else, perhaps separatism.

Mein Kampf gives a clue into the dynamics that breaks down a

cohesive multi-ethnic society that is followed by radicalization of the individual. Basically, you have a minority group, to which there exists within, a smaller group of nationalists who promote ethnocentricity and in some cases, outright separatism. Over time, after continued propagation of this aspect, the way people perceive interactions in their immediate environment begins to take on strong ethnic overtones. Of course, one will put the onus on the larger group to tolerate the smaller group's assertion of distinction from the rest of the population. But is it warranted to consider that this tolerance can be applied without limits? especially when we see over and over again, how the result of this component of nationalism, only leads to minority groups becoming ever more marginalized, due to the breakdown in how people come to perceive diversity. If we look at *Mein Kampf*, we see that even Hitler once saw no difference among the diverse peoples living in Vienna during his early years. There seems to have been a breakdown when he began to encounter nationalist elements within the Jewish population, but even then he was aware of liberal Jews who did not give credence to those nationalist elements within their own demographic. Hitler writes in *Mein Kampf*:

“Once, when passing through the inner City, I suddenly encountered a phenomenon in a long caftan and wearing black side-locks. My first thought was: Is this a Jew? They certainly did not have this appearance in Linz. I watched the man stealthily and cautiously; but the longer I gazed at the strange countenance and examined it feature by feature, the more the question shaped itself in my brain: Is this a German? As was always my habit with such experiences, I turned to books for help in removing my doubts. For the first time in my life I bought myself some anti-Semitic pamphlets for a few pence. But unfortunately they all began with the assumption that in principle the reader had at least a certain degree of information on the Jewish question or was even familiar with it. Moreover, the tone of most of these pamphlets was such that I became doubtful again, because the statements made were partly superficial and the proofs extraordinarily unscientific. For weeks, and indeed for months, I returned to my old way of thinking. The subject appeared so enormous and the accusations were so far-reaching that I was afraid of dealing with it unjustly and so I became again anxious and uncertain. Naturally I could no longer doubt that here there was not a question of Germans who happened to be of a different religion but rather that there was question of an entirely different people. For as soon as I began to investigate the matter and observe the Jews, then Vienna appeared to me in a different light. Wherever I now went I saw Jews, and the more I saw of them the more strikingly and clearly they stood out as a different people from the other citizens. Especially the Inner City and the district northwards from the

Danube Canal swarmed with a people who, even in outer appearance, bore no similarity to the Germans. But any indecision which I may still have felt about that point was finally removed by the activities of a certain section of the Jews themselves. A great movement, called Zionism, arose among them. Its aim was to assert the national character of Judaism, and the movement was strongly represented in Vienna. To outward appearances it seemed as if only one group of Jews championed this movement, while the great majority disapproved of it, or even repudiated it. But an investigation of the situation showed that those outward appearances were purposely misleading. These outward appearances emerged from a mist of theories which had been produced for reasons of expediency, if not for purposes of downright deception. For that part of Jewry which was styled Liberal did not disown the Zionists as if they were not members of their race but rather as brother Jews who publicly professed their faith in an unpractical way, so as to create a danger for Jewry itself"

Notice how Hitler, even after first encountering antisemitic literature, he still goes back to perceiving no division within his immediate environment, even after encountering Jews who appeared to distinguish themselves from typical German culture. But then, what happens? He encounters a nationalist movement among the Jewish people, and, still, he is aware that it is just a portion of that demographic that pushes those ideas, while the rest of the Jewish people remain aloof to it. This was essentially the state of affairs not only in Germany before World War I, but also in the US and Ukraine regarding how people perceived diversity in their respective countries. The outlook was..."sure, there are people of diverse character, but I don't perceive them to be fundamentally different from me" Hence, why interactions within one's immediate environment during that time didn't carry so much the ethnic overtones they do now. Even Hitler had this outlook for a time. But then he begins to eventually surmise that liberal Jews were not doing enough to resist this ethnocentric movement within their Jewish demographic, and then that's when his perception of his environment changes. Of course it was aided by antisemitic discourse, but that alone cannot be singled out as the sole factor when ethnocentrism among even minority groups can be alarming. And yes, this goes the opposite way as well, when minority groups don't perceive the majority group as doing enough to resist their own version of nationalism. So subsequently, for Hitler, everything regarding Jews begins to take on ethnic overtones. Mind you, this is where the United States is at right now regarding all the different ethnic groups, from Jews to Blacks, to Hispanics, to Arabs and so forth. Everyone perceives the division acutely, even the ones who try to retain a sense

of tolerance. Any and all inconveniences encountered now are perceived to have an ethnic connotation. And each group is slowly beginning to lose sight of those components within a demographic that don't purport a separate national identity. This is where Ukraine was in 2004, after the orange revolution, when people begin to lose sight of those Ukrainians that are not nationalists or Russian Ukrainians who are also not ethnocentric, but quite resistant to nationalism. In the US, there are still liberals who are trying to keep it from reaching the next critical stage where anti-nationalist elements within a demographic are no longer believed to exist. Such a perspective would thereby trigger separatism. People such as Michael Moore and Candance Owens are good examples of archetypes that can keep it from reaching this next critical phase of separatism and territorialism. Unfortunately, Ukraine had already reached the phase of separatism and territorialism, which brings us to where we are today. Even Zelenskyy has no longer retained any reservations that ethnic Russians in Donbas are not given to nationalism and separatism and has already castigated them for not doing enough to resist the pro-Russian separatists. And the pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine knew well in advance what they were signing, not only themselves up for, but also the women, elderly and children living in the Donbas region.

Volume I: Anthony's Treaty

(written in December of 2021)

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Author's Note

On February 24 2022, Russia's military began a large-scale invasion of Ukraine, on the heels of deteriorating relations between Ukraine and Russia over the issue of Crimea, the Donbas conflict in eastern Ukraine, and the possibility of Ukraine joining NATO. 15 years of NATO and US provocation of Russia had finally reached a tipping point. NATO's eastward expansion, their unjustified destabilization of Iraq, Libya, and Syria, the aggressive military drills near Russia's borders, and the US's abandonment of a Cold War era Nuclear Treaty with Russia, has brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. This book was written and edited up unto 2 days before the invasion and was intended to outline solutions that would help de-escalate tensions between Ukraine and Russia over those matters which came about as a result of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014. One of those solutions was that Ukraine avoid military alliance with the United States for a period of 40 years. However, as time would tell, the US abandoned a strategy pursued gracefully by former Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, which entailed that keeping Ukraine away from the ire of Russia would require that NATO members take a proactive approach in refusing to admit Ukraine into the alliance. This strategy worked well enough to mitigate the possibility of Russia ever even recognizing the Donbas region as independent of Ukraine, let alone launching a massive invasion of the country. But as misfortune would have it, the US never conformed and insisted that Ukraine stand up to Russia and choose for themselves, while purporting they would back Ukraine if Russia chose to pursue aggression. Nothing could have been further from the truth, as President Zelensky of Ukraine would state "We have been left alone to defend our state."

In early 2021, Russia began mobilizing its troops on the southern, eastern, and northern border of Ukraine, a buildup due in large part to dangerous and combative rhetoric from the United States, a country that has been eager for many years to enjoin Ukraine with NATO, a prospect considered even by other NATO members such as France and Germany, as needlessly provocative to Russia. After the US pulled out of a Cold War era nuclear treaty with Russia in 2019, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, became concerned that NATO would deliver intermediate range ballistic missiles to Ukraine. These fears were ignited when President Zelensky of Ukraine announced that he intended for Ukraine to pursue NATO membership. Thus in February of 2022, Putin recognized the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic, which are two breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine declared autonomous by pro-Russian separatists over the course of the Ukrainian civil war which began in 2014. The very next day, the Russian Federation authorized the use of military force, and deployment of Russian troops to both territories. And

finally on February 24th, Putin declared that Russian troops would be conducting a "special military operation" intended to "demilitarise" and "denazify" Ukraine. Within minutes of that declaration, Russian missiles began striking targets all across Ukraine, even in the capital, Kyiv. President Zelensky of Ukraine immediately declared martial law and initiated a complete mobilization of the country, providing arms to anyone willing to fight.

As reports of the invasion began to spread, Russia would come under international condemnation, as sanctions against Russia's banking sector caused the Russian currency, the ruble, to collapse. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, over one million Ukrainians fled the country during the first week of the Russian offensive. Concurrently, protests against Russia broke out in many countries throughout the world, and also in Russia, where Russian police would arrest protesters en masse. Ukraine received massive humanitarian and military aid, which led to Putin putting Russia's nuclear forces on high alert, and raising the possibility of all out nuclear war.

Back in March and April of 2021, Russia started a large military build-up very close to the Russo-Ukrainian border, and again later in October of 2021. Despite this, Russia repeatedly denied that it had any plans to invade Ukraine. Ukraine was also confident that Russia was not planning a full-scale invasion; this, regardless of the fact that US intelligence was insistent that an invasion was imminent. Russia accused the US of instigating hysteria and using dis-information tactics to paint Russia as the aggressor. Nonetheless, the US would release evidence of a Russian invasion, such as satellite imagery of the Russian buildup near the border and revelations about the existence of a list of individuals and places that Russia was planning to target. During the months leading up to the conflict, Russia had accused Ukraine of inciting Russophobia and became resolute that Ukraine should cut ties with NATO and the US. Putin had also accused the Ukrainian government of conducting forced cultural assimilation and genocide of Russian speakers in the Donbas region, all of which had been dismissed by a large majority of the international community. The US called it a complete falsehood, while the US state department considered Russia's accusations to be a pretext to justify a Russian invasion of Ukraine. Yet Putin continued to pursue the notion that Ukraine was run by neo-Nazi groups that were backed by the US during the 2014 coup and ousting of pro-Russian president of Ukraine Victor Yanucovych. The Azov battalion, a militia group in Ukraine notorious for adopting Nazi symbolism and recruiting neo-Nazi fighters from abroad, had been integrated into the Ukrainian military. A former leader of the one of the far right groups had become a member of Ukraine's parliament. However, many feel that notions of Ukrainian "nazification" should be put to rest owing to the fact the President Zelensky of Ukraine is Jewish and a native

Russian speaker who has stated that his grandfather fought with the Soviet Union against the Nazis. Three of his relatives in fact died in the Holocaust.

Still and all, Putin remained adamant on Ukraine not joining NATO, as well as NATO scaling down troops, military exercises and hardware stationed in eastern Europe. He also threatened military action if NATO continued aggressive and provocational tactics. All these concerns and demands were subsequently ignored by the US and NATO.

Fighting in Donbas would escalate starting on February 17, 2022, as the total number of attacks on that one day would exceed the total through the first six weeks of 2022. Both Russian and Ukraine would accuse each other of igniting the escalation. The separatist forces stated that Ukrainian government forces launched attacks on their positions, while the Ukrainian government forces showed evidence that the separatists had shelled a kindergarten school. As a result of this renewed shelling, the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics on February 18th declared a mandatory evacuation of civilians from those regions, ordering that they escape to Russia. Ukraine would report that the increase in shelling was meant to provoke the Ukrainian army. On February 21st, the FSB, which is Russia's Federal Security Service reported that the shelling from Ukrainian government forces destroyed an FSB border facility near the Russia-Ukraine border. That same day, it was reported that the Russian army had killed five saboteurs near the village of Mityakinskaya. It was stated that these saboteurs had tried to break through the border into Russia using military vehicles. Ukraine denied involvement and considered the allegation as nothing more than a false flag. Several analysts agreed that many of the alleged attacks, shellings and bombings were staged by Russian forces. However, later that day, Putin recognized the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics as independent from Ukraine. He then ordered Russian troops into the Donbas region as part of a peacekeeping mission. The move was condemned by the UN Security Council and considered by the US as "the beginning of a Russian invasion of Ukraine." President Zelensky of Ukraine ordered a draft of Ukraine's reservists, while holding off on a full military mobilization. On February 23rd, the Verkhovna Rada, the parliament of Ukraine, declared a temporary state of emergency. Russia then ordered the evacuation of its embassy in Kyiv, as Russian hackers launched cyber-attacks against Ukrainian government and banking websites. Zelensky remained clear that he had no intention to invade the Donbas region and continued to dispell the notion that Ukraine's parliament is comprised of neo-Nazis. Nevertheless, leaders of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics implored Russia for military assistance in staving off Ukrainian government forces, whom they have accused of carrying out shelling

and terrorism on civilians. Ukraine immediately requested UN intervention urging that they convene an emergency UN Security Council meeting. There, UN Secretary, Antonio Guterres, implored Putin to consider peace. However, not long into the meeting, Russia would announce the invasion of Ukraine.

On February 24, 2022, Putin announced that he had decided to launch what he calls a "special military operation" in eastern Ukraine. Here is his official address to the nations:

President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Citizens of Russia, friends, I consider it necessary today to speak again about the tragic events in Donbass and the key aspects of ensuring the security of Russia. I will begin with what I said in my address on February 21, 2022. I spoke about our biggest concerns and worries, and about the fundamental threats which irresponsible Western politicians created for Russia consistently, rudely and uncereemoniously from year to year. I am referring to the eastward expansion of NATO, which is moving its military infrastructure ever closer to the Russian border. It is a fact that over the past 30 years we have been patiently trying to come to an agreement with the leading NATO countries regarding the principles of equal and indivisible security in Europe. In response to our proposals, we invariably faced either cynical deception and lies or attempts at pressure and blackmail, while the North Atlantic alliance continued to expand despite our protests and concerns. Its military machine is moving and, as I said, is approaching our very border. Why is this happening? Where did this insolent manner of talking down from the height of their exceptionalism, infallibility and allpermissiveness come from? What is the explanation for this contemptuous and disdainful attitude to our interests and absolutely legitimate demands? The answer is simple. Everything is clear and obvious. In the late 1980s, the Soviet Union grew weaker and subsequently broke apart. That experience should serve as a good lesson for us, because it has shown us that the paralysis of power and will is the first step towards complete degradation and oblivion. We lost confidence for only one moment, but it was enough to disrupt the balance of forces in the world. As a result, the old treaties and agreements are no longer effective. Entreaties and requests do not help. Anything that does not suit the dominant state, the powers that be, is denounced as archaic, obsolete and useless. At the same time, everything it regards as useful is presented as the ultimate truth and forced on others regardless of the cost, abusively and by any means available. Those who refuse to comply are subjected to strong-arm tactics. What I am saying now does not concerns only Russia, and Russia is not the only country that is worried about this. This has to do with the entire system of international relations, and sometimes even US

allies. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a redivision of the world, and the norms of international law that developed by that time – and the most important of them, the fundamental norms that were adopted following WWII and largely formalised its outcome – came in the way of those who declared themselves the winners of the Cold War. Of course, practice, international relations and the rules regulating them had to take into account the changes that took place in the world and in the balance of forces. However, this should have been done professionally, smoothly, patiently, and with due regard and respect for the interests of all states and one's own responsibility. Instead, we saw a state of euphoria created by the feeling of absolute superiority, a kind of modern absolutism, coupled with the low cultural standards and arrogance of those who formulated and pushed through decisions that suited only themselves. The situation took a different turn. There are many examples of this. First a bloody military operation was waged against Belgrade, without the UN Security Council's sanction but with combat aircraft and missiles used in the heart of Europe. The bombing of peaceful cities and vital infrastructure went on for several weeks. I have to recall these facts, because some Western colleagues prefer to forget them, and when we mentioned the event, they prefer to avoid speaking about international law, instead emphasising the circumstances which they interpret as they think necessary. Then came the turn of Iraq, Libya and Syria. The illegal use of military power against Libya and the distortion of all the UN Security Council decisions on Libya ruined the state, created a huge seat of international terrorism, and pushed the country towards a humanitarian catastrophe, into the vortex of a civil war, which has continued there for years. The tragedy, which was created for hundreds of thousands and even millions of people not only in Libya but in the whole region, has led to a large-scale exodus from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe. A similar fate was also prepared for Syria. The combat operations conducted by the Western coalition in that country without the Syrian government's approval or UN Security Council's sanction can only be defined as aggression and intervention. But the example that stands apart from the above events is, of course, the invasion of Iraq without any legal grounds. They used the pretext of allegedly reliable information available in the United States about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. To prove that allegation, the US Secretary of State held up a vial with white power, publicly, for the whole world to see, assuring the international community that it was a chemical warfare agent created in Iraq. It later turned out that all of that was a fake and a sham, and that Iraq did not have any chemical weapons. Incredible and shocking but true. We witnessed lies made at the highest state level and voiced from the

high UN rostrum. As a result we see a tremendous loss in human life, damage, destruction, and a colossal upsurge of terrorism. Overall, it appears that nearly everywhere, in many regions of the world where the United States brought its law and order, this created bloody, non-healing wounds and the curse of international terrorism and extremism. I have only mentioned the most glaring but far from only examples of disregard for international law. This array includes promises not to expand NATO eastwards even by an inch. To reiterate: they have deceived us, or, to put it simply, they have played us. Sure, one often hears that politics is a dirty business. It could be, but it shouldn't be as dirty as it is now, not to such an extent. This type of con-artist behaviour is contrary not only to the principles of international relations but also and above all to the generally accepted norms of morality and ethics. Where is justice and truth here? Just lies and hypocrisy all around. Incidentally, US politicians, political scientists and journalists write and say that a veritable "empire of lies" has been created inside the United States in recent years. It is hard to disagree with this – it is really so. But one should not be modest about it: the United States is still a great country and a system-forming power. All its satellites not only humbly and obediently say yes to and parrot it at the slightest pretext but also imitate its behaviour and enthusiastically accept the rules it is offering them. Therefore, one can say with good reason and confidence that the whole so-called Western bloc formed by the United States in its own image and likeness is, in its entirety, the very same "empire of lies." As for our country, after the disintegration of the USSR, given the entire unprecedented openness of the new, modern Russia, its readiness to work honestly with the United States and other Western partners, and its practically unilateral disarmament, they immediately tried to put the final squeeze on us, finish us off, and utterly destroy us. This is how it was in the 1990s and the early 2000s, when the so-called collective West was actively supporting separatism and gangs of mercenaries in southern Russia. What victims, what losses we had to sustain and what trials we had to go through at that time before we broke the back of international terrorism in the Caucasus! We remember this and will never forget. Properly speaking, the attempts to use us in their own interests never ceased until quite recently: they sought to destroy our traditional values and force on us their false values that would erode us, our people from within, the attitudes they have been aggressively imposing on their countries, attitudes that are directly leading to degradation and degeneration, because they are contrary to human nature. This is not going to happen. No one has ever succeeded in doing this, nor will they succeed now. Despite all that, in December 2021, we made yet another attempt to reach agreement with the United States and its allies on the principles of European

security and NATO's non-expansion. Our efforts were in vain. The United States has not changed its position. It does not believe it necessary to agree with Russia on a matter that is critical for us. The United States is pursuing its own objectives, while neglecting our interests. Of course, this situation begs a question: what next, what are we to expect? If history is any guide, we know that in 1940 and early 1941 the Soviet Union went to great lengths to prevent war or at least delay its outbreak. To this end, the USSR sought not to provoke the potential aggressor until the very end by refraining or postponing the most urgent and obvious preparations it had to make to defend itself from an imminent attack. When it finally acted, it was too late. As a result, the country was not prepared to counter the invasion by Nazi Germany, which attacked our Motherland on June 22, 1941, without declaring war. The country stopped the enemy and went on to defeat it, but this came at a tremendous cost. The attempt to appease the aggressor ahead of the Great Patriotic War proved to be a mistake which came at a high cost for our people. In the first months after the hostilities broke out, we lost vast territories of strategic importance, as well as millions of lives. We will not make this mistake the second time. We have no right to do so. Those who aspire to global dominance have publicly designated Russia as their enemy. They did so with impunity. Make no mistake, they had no reason to act this way. It is true that they have considerable financial, scientific, technological, and military capabilities. We are aware of this and have an objective view of the economic threats we have been hearing, just as our ability to counter this brash and never-ending blackmail. Let me reiterate that we have no illusions in this regard and are extremely realistic in our assessments. As for military affairs, even after the dissolution of the USSR and losing a considerable part of its capabilities, today's Russia remains one of the most powerful nuclear states. Moreover, it has a certain advantage in several cutting-edge weapons. In this context, there should be no doubt for anyone that any potential aggressor will face defeat and ominous consequences should it directly attack our country. At the same time, technology, including in the defence sector, is changing rapidly. One day there is one leader, and tomorrow another, but a military presence in territories bordering on Russia, if we permit it to go ahead, will stay for decades to come or maybe forever, creating an ever mounting and totally unacceptable threat for Russia. Even now, with NATO's eastward expansion the situation for Russia has been becoming worse and more dangerous by the year. Moreover, these past days NATO leadership has been blunt in its statements that they need to accelerate and step up efforts to bring the alliance's infrastructure closer to Russia's borders. In other words, they have been toughening their position. We cannot stay idle and passively

observe these developments. This would be an absolutely irresponsible thing to do for us. Any further expansion of the North Atlantic alliance's infrastructure or the ongoing efforts to gain a military foothold of the Ukrainian territory are unacceptable for us. Of course, the question is not about NATO itself. It merely serves as a tool of US foreign policy. The problem is that in territories adjacent to Russia, which I have to note is our historical land, a hostile "anti-Russia" is taking shape. Fully controlled from the outside, it is doing everything to attract NATO armed forces and obtain cutting-edge weapons. For the United States and its allies, it is a policy of containing Russia, with obvious geopolitical dividends. For our country, it is a matter of life and death, a matter of our historical future as a nation. This is not an exaggeration; this is a fact. It is not only a very real threat to our interests but to the very existence of our state and to its sovereignty. It is the red line which we have spoken about on numerous occasions. They have crossed it. This brings me to the situation in Donbass. We can see that the forces that staged the coup in Ukraine in 2014 have seized power, are keeping it with the help of ornamental election procedures and have abandoned the path of a peaceful conflict settlement. For eight years, for eight endless years we have been doing everything possible to settle the situation by peaceful political means. Everything was in vain. As I said in my previous address, you cannot look without compassion at what is happening there. It became impossible to tolerate it. We had to stop that atrocity, that genocide of the millions of people who live there and who pinned their hopes on Russia, on all of us. It is their aspirations, the feelings and pain of these people that were the main motivating force behind our decision to recognise the independence of the Donbass people's republics. I would like to additionally emphasise the following. Focused on their own goals, the leading NATO countries are supporting the farright nationalists and neo-Nazis in Ukraine, those who will never forgive the people of Crimea and Sevastopol for freely making a choice to reunite with Russia. They will undoubtedly try to bring war to Crimea just as they have done in Donbass, to kill innocent people just as members of the punitive units of Ukrainian nationalists and Hitler's accomplices did during the Great Patriotic War. They have also openly laid claim to several other Russian regions. If we look at the sequence of events and the incoming reports, the showdown between Russia and these forces cannot be avoided. It is only a matter of time. They are getting ready and waiting for the right moment. Moreover, they went as far as aspire to acquire nuclear weapons. We will not let this happen. I have already said that Russia accepted the new geopolitical reality after the dissolution of the USSR. We have been treating all new postSoviet states with respect and will continue to act this way. We

respect and will respect their sovereignty, as proven by the assistance we provided to Kazakhstan when it faced tragic events and a challenge in terms of its statehood and integrity. However, Russia cannot feel safe, develop, and exist while facing a permanent threat from the territory of today's Ukraine. Let me remind you that in 2000–2005 we used our military to push back against terrorists in the Caucasus and stood up for the integrity of our state. We preserved Russia. In 2014, we supported the people of Crimea and Sevastopol. In 2015, we used our Armed Forces to create a reliable shield that prevented terrorists from Syria from penetrating Russia. This was a matter of defending ourselves. We had no other choice. The same is happening today. They did not leave us any other option for defending Russia and our people, other than the one we are forced to use today. In these circumstances, we have to take bold and immediate action. The people's republics of Donbass have asked Russia for help. In this context, in accordance with Article 51 (Chapter VII) of the UN Charter, with permission of Russia's Federation Council, and in execution of the treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic, ratified by the Federal Assembly on February 22, I made a decision to carry out a special military operation. The purpose of this operation is to protect people who, for eight years now, have been facing humiliation and genocide perpetrated by the Kiev regime. To this end, we will seek to demilitarise and denazify Ukraine, as well as bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians, including against citizens of the Russian Federation. It is not our plan to occupy the Ukrainian territory. We do not intend to impose anything on anyone by force. At the same time, we have been hearing an increasing number of statements coming from the West that there is no need any more to abide by the documents setting forth the outcomes of World War II, as signed by the totalitarian Soviet regime. How can we respond to that? The outcomes of World War II and the sacrifices our people had to make to defeat Nazism are sacred. This does not contradict the high values of human rights and freedoms in the reality that emerged over the post-war decades. This does not mean that nations cannot enjoy the right to self-determination, which is enshrined in Article 1 of the UN Charter. Let me remind you that the people living in territories which are part of today's Ukraine were not asked how they want to build their lives when the USSR was created or after World War II. Freedom guides our policy, the freedom to choose independently our future and the future of our children. We believe that all the peoples living in today's Ukraine, anyone who want to do this, must be able to enjoy this right to make a free choice. In this context I would like to address the citizens of Ukraine. In 2014, Russia was obliged to

protect the people of Crimea and Sevastopol from those who you yourself call “nats.” The people of Crimea and Sevastopol made their choice in favour of being with their historical homeland, Russia, and we supported their choice. As I said, we could not act otherwise. The current events have nothing to do with a desire to infringe on the interests of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. They are connected with the defending Russia from those who have taken Ukraine hostage and are trying to use it against our country and our people. I reiterate: we are acting to defend ourselves from the threats created for us and from a worse peril than what is happening now. I am asking you, however hard this may be, to understand this and to work together with us so as to turn this tragic page as soon as possible and to move forward together, without allowing anyone to interfere in our affairs and our relations but developing them independently, so as to create favourable conditions for overcoming all these problems and to strengthen us from within as a single whole, despite the existence of state borders. I believe in this, in our common future. I would also like to address the military personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Comrade officers, Your fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers did not fight the Nazi occupiers and did not defend our common Motherland to allow today’s neo-Nazis to seize power in Ukraine. You swore the oath of allegiance to the Ukrainian people and not to the junta, the people’s adversary which is plundering Ukraine and humiliating the Ukrainian people. I urge you to refuse to carry out their criminal orders. I urge you to immediately lay down arms and go home. I will explain what this means: the military personnel of the Ukrainian army who do this will be able to freely leave the zone of hostilities and return to their families. I want to emphasise again that all responsibility for the possible bloodshed will lie fully and wholly with the ruling Ukrainian regime. I would now like to say something very important for those who may be tempted to interfere in these developments from the outside. No matter who tries to stand in our way or all the more so create threats for our country and our people, they must know that Russia will respond immediately, and the consequences will be such as you have never seen in your entire history. No matter how the events unfold, we are ready. All the necessary decisions in this regard have been taken. I hope that my words will be heard. Citizens of Russia,

Within minutes of this announcement by President Vladimir Putin, explosions were seen and heard throughout Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, and the Donbas region. President Zelensky of Ukraine immediately declared martial law, and ordered that all Ukrainian males between the ages of 18 and 60 take up arms to defend Ukraine against the Russian forces. Russian troops invaded Ukraine coming in north

from Belarus, making their way towards Kyiv. Another batch of Russian troops arrived coming in northeast from Russia going towards Kharkiv; Some had come east from the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. Another surge of Russian troops came in south from Crimea. The Russian troops advancing towards Kyiv took control of Chernobyl, which had been ghost town due to the nuclear power plant explosion that took place there in 1986. Despite strong resistance from the Ukrainian forces, the Russians were able to take control of its nuclear power plant. Russian forces then pushed into Ivankiv and seized the Antonov Airport. On February 26th, Russian paratroopers descended on the Vasylykiv Air Base and engaged the Ukrainian forces in fierce fighting. In the northeast, Russian troops were also met with heavy Ukrainian resistance, as they tried to seize control of Kharkiv and Sumy. Many Ukrainians conducted guerilla and urban warfare against the Russian advance. From the east, Russian forces pushed forward towards Mariupol, but came across more Ukrainian resistance, such as in the village of Pavlopil, where the Ukrainian fighters would defeat the Russian forces. Russia subsequently deployed a massive navy in an amphibious assault in the sea of Azov, pushing through the coastline and nearly surrounding the city of Volnovakha.

On February 24th, Russia had taken control of the North Crimean Canal, which allowed water supplies to flow into Crimea, a flashpoint throughout the Donbas conflict. This was followed by an advance upon and siege of the city of Mariupol. Shortly thereafter, the Russian forces would take Melitopol and Kherson by early March. Russian troops coming in from Crimea attempted to take control of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in Enerhodar, but a fire broke out, causing a radiation scare. Later, it was reported that there was no radiation leak.

Most notable event in the fighting between Ukrainian and Russian forces was when the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine announced on February 24th that an attack on Snake Island by Russian Navy ships was underway. After the island encountered heavy fire from the encroaching Russian warship, the Russian warship identified itself and instructed the Ukrainian soldiers to surrender, but the Ukrainians responded by yelling "Russian warship, go fuck yourself!" Russian soldiers did eventually take control of the island.

In the mean time, President Zelensky of Ukraine had implored western leaders for more help in defending Ukraine from a Russian invasion, in particular by way of providing air defense by closing off Ukraine's airspace. But NATO/US rejected his request for fighter jets, due to the fact that it could escalate the conflict into a global nuclear war. Much of the aid provided by the west had come in the form of sanctions against Russia and the delivery of lethal military arms to

Ukraine, such as anti-aircraft, anti-tank, drones, and other advanced form of artillery, as well as moral support and medical supplies. Despite his unmet demands of a more intensive military support from western powers, President Zelensky has managed to orchestrate and schedule a number ceasefire talks with Russia, while reaching out to foreign leaders who have volunteered to mediate on his behalf. He has remained in Ukraine throughout the crisis and has gained a worldwide following, even among many in Russia. Sympathizers in Russia's FSB have relayed information to him about assassination plots, allowing him and his officials to uncover and foil them. We can only hope that this crisis, which has already claimed thousands of lives, both Ukrainian civilians and soldiers, will come to an end. As of early March 2022, 2000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed during the conflict, as well as 2800 Ukrainian soldiers. 9000 Russian soldiers have also been killed since the Russian invasion began. The shelling and missile strikes continue even as Ukraine and Russia began ceasefire talks, and hopes for a peaceful end to the war dwindles slowly each day, as hundreds of structures such as transport facilities, apartment complexes, hospitals, kindergartens and homes continue to be destroyed each day by ceaseless rocket fire. Without a direct intervention by the west or an immediate ceasefire, Ukraine will eventually fall to the Russians as soon all the major cities are completely surrounded by Russian forces. This, a welcome prospect for many since they believe that NATO or US intervention will cause a nuclear war to break out in which millions more around the world would be decimated. But as would be the case, just as in many places where governments have been toppled by invasion or by uprising, some form of insurgency has always followed. And this will likely be the case in Ukraine should Russia install a government there after taking over the country. The Russian invasion of Ukraine marks a transition in European security. As Ukrainians continue to resist the onslaught of a far more heavily armed and advanced Russian invasion force, experts have forewarned of a prolonged Ukrainian insurgency, one led by both Ukrainian military personnel and private militia groups, as well as regular citizens. This type of conflict would mirror the insurgent warfare taking place throughout the middle east. It could devolve into a terrorist movement should Ukrainian citizens become content to move forward with the agenda of its Russia influenced governance, with separatists opposed to Russian occupation willing to attack the mainstream population in order to provoke a civil war and regime change. Just as Syria is still contending with small pockets of ISIS militants hiding underground throughout the region, conducting surprise ambushes on Syria soldiers, Russia will likely face the same issue should they occupy Ukraine—having to contend with small pockets of violent Ukrainian insurgents unwilling to give up the fight or surrender Ukraine's

sovereignty to Russian hegemony.

Because the Russians have a more advanced and superior arsenal of weapons than the Ukrainians, and also a larger military force, many analysts have concluded that the Ukrainians are unlikely to defeat the Russians. However, as an insurgent force, the Ukrainians can make a Russian occupation very difficult. The tactics used by insurgents will be far more brutal than the tactics being used now. It has been reported that the Ukrainian resistance has treated a number of captured Russian soldiers humanely, even allowing many of them to contact their parents. This would not be the case during an insurgency in response to a prevailing domestic policy that would have accepted being occupied by a foreign military force. The logic applied by insurgents in this scenario would serve only the purpose of making occupation insufferable; keeping Russian soldiers on constant alert, overreactive, and insomnolent, much like ISIS does to Syrian soldiers in Syria. The resulting fear this provokes helps sustain the morale of insurgents, since it is the case that this type of warfare is meant to stifle the resolve of an occupying force.

It is very likely that the Russians will maintain control of Kyiv and other cities, by way of installing a puppet government. And once they declare that the war is over, it is quite plausible that many Ukrainians may return to their country and seek to re-establish some form of normalcy in their daily lives—and this book reinforces the importance of that pursuit. When this new sense of order is allowed to crystalize within the society, it will be much easier for Russia to portray insurgents as a disruptive force to the lives of everyday citizens, because it's likely that insurgents will interpret complacency as hostility, and may impose a course of action that doesn't distinguish between their enemy and the populace, so long as their actions achieve the goal of disrupting the prevailing order. At the moment as Russia has invaded Ukraine, all of Ukraine is united in formation against the Russian occupying forces, but when things settle down and much of the population begins to prioritize their daily lives over the political paradigm they live under, only the most extreme elements of the resistance will continue to pursue confrontation with Russian forces, thereby disrupting the process of stability in Ukraine. This will complicate the politics of insurgency and could lead to a shift in mainstream outlooks of prolonged Ukrainian resistance. It is very likely that the insurgents will also shift from a course of action that targets strictly military forces to a course of action which will target both military and the civilian populations. The reality is that both Russian and Ukrainian speakers in Ukraine will now be violently opposed to each other for decades to come.

Unwavering support for the Ukrainian insurgency should it continue will ultimately turn out to be unwavering support for terrorism in Ukraine, because all that will remain of this insurgency

when the mainstream population opts to return to some form of stability, are the most extremist elements which are willing to stop at nothing in order to upset any chance of Russian rule becoming an accepted part of Ukrainian life. And this will have far-reaching implications for how we adapt to the geopolitical sphere.

At the moment, there is a strong channel of money and arms supply to Ukrainian insurgents, but it should be made clear that as this conflict drags on, and the insurgency begins to dwindle, those remaining elements will seek out cooperation with those who share similar goals. Many far right groups in Ukraine over the last few years have identified with the neo-Nazi elements which are still embedded to a small degree within western societies, but this may change as much of the funding and arms provided is predicated on the belief that such a narrative is only propagated by anti-democratic Russian propaganda. It is very likely that the Ukrainian insurgency could find itself strongly aligned with Mideast insurgent groups like ISIS, whose backdrop involves contention with an unjustified military invasion of their country. Much of ISIS's leadership is comprised of Saddam loyalists who refuse to accept the overthrow of their longstanding leader. Furthermore, as far as the Ukrainian insurgency goes, there is no way to stop what has been set in motion by the Russian invasion—the concept that Russian speakers and Ukrainian speakers are enemies at the very core. Now that Ukrainian civilians have become adapted to the idea of warfare and death, many will have no qualms about pursuing this reality for years to come.

Introduction

Separatism and Terrorism. Most nations are founded upon a real application of these concepts, and of course, in real time, these things are not exactly the most highly regarded pursuits. It is only those members of the population, who are actively carrying out such divisive and brutal perspectives that deem these activities wise and noble. It is so confined to them that even many of those whom the separatist claim to represent are put-off and appalled at the thought of being included and embedded into their zealous web of destruction, aimed at establishing for their own demographic, a living space and identity. But what are the origins of separatism? One would assume that a person or group of people don't enter into that realm of thinking overnight. History shows that first and foremost a nation's inability to get everyone that is situated within its geographical boundaries to perceive all inhabitants thereof to have some semblance of fundamental kinship—is a reason why countries become unstable and collapse. This instability is often aided by so-called peaceful protests. Furthermore, that semblance of fundamental kinship, even if minute in capacity, can keep distinctions among a populace from breaking out into all-out schism, where identity and land become tied together. The semblance of fundamental kinship was the case in Ukraine after their declaration of independence in 1991, of which its geographical boundaries constituted within it a population of both Ukrainian-speaking east Slavs and Russian speaking east Slavs. And amidst the great magnitude of their historical backdrop of tension and tragedy, both were able to coexist rather efficiently for a time, even in light of their cultural differences. This has to be credited to the overarching effort put forth by the mainstream to quell any notion that such differences need to be prioritized in each other's daily lives. This aspect can keep at bay, those grievances involving parties of different cultural backgrounds. It also allows people to disassociate and suppress from their interactions—both positive and negative—an ethnic connotation that would—if allowed to crystallize within their own conscious framework—place them on a path towards aloofness and disappointment towards the other demographic. These measures aimed at de-prioritizing the distinctions amongst a populace allows everyone to assert themselves in various institutions, without them having to feel as though their cultural backdrop would only serve to stifle their efforts. In the midst of this dynamic, there are exceptions, in which those who do encounter grievance embark upon the path to separatism even in lieu of a paradigm that encourages otherwise. But it must be said that, even in that case, the mainstream effort to deprioritize the distinctions keeps the separatists from launching excursions into the mainstream. They simply remain aggrieved in the

background, that is, until their opportunity arrives—the opportunity to latch onto the peaceful protest movement and incite violence. Oftentimes, the extreme version of the separatist—the terrorist, will use the public protest as their signal to take action and launch brutal attacks on the mainstream population, in the hopes of triggering selfpreservation amongst the populace and compelling them to situate themselves within their own respective demographic against the rest. But the systemic danger of public protesting is not always relegated to being within a nation state. It can take on a residual transnational form, where protest in one country can embolden and trigger terrorism in another. An example is how “Black Lives Matter” protests in the United States could be used by terrorists in France as a signal to launch attacks on the mainstream population there. There is no mainstream concept of race in France, so in order for separatists to find fuel for their agenda, they must look to social developments outside of their own country.

It must be the case that initial separatism must arise from toxic familiarity, where grievances with one type of people who represent a certain cultural framework piles up on the individual and compels him to cultivate a hostile worldview towards those he has become too familiar with. This is where too much of trying to unify peoples of various differences backfires. Just as there are humans who are wired to develop animosity towards those who are unfamiliar to them, there are those who can harbor animosity towards those who have become too familiar to them. Hence why radical nationalistic terrorism within the confines of a well-defined geographical space is often carried out by people who are familiar with the cultural or racial backdrop that their victims represent. They either grew up in environments which heavily exposed them to those types, or had fallouts in the past with people of that demographic and had as a result become cynical of that particular cultural group. Now imagine someone harboring all those grievances and frustrations that have come about from direct personal experience with a certain type of people, but no real mainstream avenue to justify an expression of this anger. He is then confronted by a mass movement in which what represents his cultural backdrop is pitted against what represents the cultural backdrop of those he has come to harbor antipathy towards. Now, he has been provided an environment conducive to releasing his frustration. But since he is of the “Familiarity breeds Contempt” psychological framework, his actions and motivation will only last until he perceives the schism to be complete. Once the schism is complete, those of the rabble rousing “Stranger equals Danger” mindset will take up the fight from there and insist on its continuation since they will have no familiarity with their target and no problem with dehumanizing them as a result of that. These types are endowed with a mindset that has been passed down from previous

generations and maintained arduously even as society has progressed over the years. In Ukraine, the small culturally-defined groups, whether pro-Ukrainian or pro-Russian, have maintained themselves for decades, keeping a tradition passed down from generation to generation, preferring to stay within this insulated framework of familiarity and predictability. Their main objective is the continued practice of their culture and customs, and within their own realm of insularity, they are able to promote ideas which revolve around the significance of their members, while downplaying the significance of those outside of that circle. Zionists, Ukrainophiles, Russophiles, Radical Muslims, White Nationalists, Black Nationalists, Neo Nazis, Jehovah's Witnesses all maintain from generation to generation a certain insularity and exclusiveness, and promote the idea of a future revolution against the bulk of humanity, one in which their particular group, even in their smaller numbers, will somehow prevail. Thus, they are always ready for conflict with those unfamiliar to them, should this scenario present itself. But for the most part, are content to stay in the background, not looking to upset the mainstream balance, so long as they can continue on with their respective practices. Perhaps, they may come out for some minor public demonstrations here and there, but nothing major. It is when that individual who maintains a very personal and direct grievance with a group largely shunned by the insulated group, goes out and declares an allegiance to the insulated group before carrying out a vicious act of terror against those he has a grievance with and who are at the same time shunned by the insulated group. In many cases, this person has only had minimal contact with the insulated group. But his action has placed the insulated group on the radar and has set not only them, but also those the insulated group claims to represent against the rest of society. An example is a black nationalist who goes out and commits an act of terror while claiming solidarity with "Black Lives Matter." He thus places both the insulated Black Lives Matter group, and the demographic they claim to represent on the radar of hostility, setting them all against the mainstream. Same with a radical Muslim going out and orchestrating an act of terror, while expressing solidarity with an insulated fundamentalist Islamic group that claims to represent all Muslims or true Islam. The terrorist thus with his heinous actions set fundamental Islam and those that fundamental Islam claims to represent against the rest of society. And in many cases, the terrorist's ties with the fundamental group was very minimal. The terrorist was also found to be born and raised in an environment that exposed him heavily to those he became antagonistic towards. There are numerous example of this dynamic, even historical ones. And it is likely this dynamic played a role in what transpired in eastern Ukraine, but it is difficult to know from which side did this dynamic first apply itself. We can surmise that perhaps

at the beginning of the mass demonstrations in Ukraine both in 2004 and in 2014, there may have been people in western and southern Ukraine that may have developed a cynical worldview of the more pro-Ukrainian element, as a result of compiled grievances incurred throughout his/her life among Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians. This person could have been bullied in school, overlooked at a place of employment, or had a severe lack of success in the romantic/dating sphere. Let say this person has a foundational backdrop of Russian heritage, but for the bulk of his life, never gave much significance to it, and didn't view himself as any different from Ukrainian speakers, even if he was technically part of the Russian demographic. Now 2004 and 2014 comes around with ethnocentric/culture/language-fueled demonstrations all over the country and then all of a sudden, this person begins to view those unfavorable situations in his life from an ethnic perspective. Of course this was always brewing beneath the surface, but in retrospect never allowed any real expression, which can perhaps be credited with the overarching paradigm established by Ukrainians throughout much of the 1990s, which insisted that the ethnic/language factor not be prioritized. But now with these mass demonstration bringing to the forefront ethnic and cultural issues, this person begins to view every unfavorable interaction in his life as a subset of Ukrainian ethnocentrism against Russian culture. He thus becomes a sympathizer to the pro-Russian element and allows the mass movements to redefine his thinking. He becomes radical and angry, as his memory takes him back to all those times that he was treated unfairly, and unlike before when he didn't perceive those interactions to carry an ethnic connotation, he now does and starts to harbor antipathy towards the Ukrainian element. He starts to seek out fellowship with pro-Russian groups and begins to propose various types of attacks on Ukrainians, even volunteering to carry out some of them. Meanwhile, even during the demonstrations, there are still segments of the population who remain steadfast in maintaining fellowship with both Russian-speakers and Ukrainian speakers. But this newly radicalized person is preparing to carry out an event that will ultimately set the insulated pro-Russian group he has made contact with and everyone that group claims to represent against the rest of Ukrainian society. The rest of the population thus have no choice in the matter except to fall into their formation accordingly. The longstanding antagonism between the insulated group of Ukrainian-speaking nationalists and the insulated group of Russianspeaking nationalists reaches critical mass, with one side able to point to a terror event as a broader war in which one culture is trying to overpower and wipe out another. Now more people in the population begins to perceive more of their interactions in terms of ethnicity and culture, and language, and thus become more separatist as a result. In Ukraine, this dynamic has gone both ways. Not only

have thousands of Ukrainian police and military officers defected to join the pro-Russian side. There are some native Russian-speakers who have defected from the pro-Russian side to join the pro-Ukrainian side. Look at the Azov battalion, a pro-Ukrainian militia group with a large portion of Russian speaking eastern Ukrainians. It is clear that their compilation of grievances throughout life must have involved a highly familiar Russian element, since much of eastern Ukraine is Russian-speaking.

When a schism reaches this level that it has in Ukraine, getting back to a point in which these cultural issues are not at the forefront of Ukrainian life is virtually uncharted. Protests, damages, terrorism, perceived discrimination at every turn is not something that can be undone overnight. But if something isn't done to curb these sentiments, the next predictable step is some form of genocide, or should I say in this regard of east Slavic history, fratricide. It is readily apparent that these nationalist groups are not going away, since they are generational and carry an element of tradition, and in many cases just want to retain their cultural practices. However, when individuals who become highly aggrieved radicals, overstimulated by mass movements and past grievances join those groups, offering to carry out terrible actions on their behalf, it not only consigns the group into an escalated conflict, but also draws everyone the group claims to represent into a broader war. Would it be enough for a group to simply disavow an individual who has claimed to act on their behalf. In many cases, the opposition will not allow the group the honor of such a gesture, since it becomes very easy to presume that members of the group had a hand in the planning and encouragement of the attack. Perhaps, the Ukrainian government can act as a middleman between the pro-Russian nationalists and the pro-Ukrainian nationalists and maybe strike a deal in which each group would be allowed to continue to exist, in exchange for reporting members whom they deem to be too radical or problematic. Of course, other factors would have to be settled first, such as the territorial issues that have arisen over the course of the conflict in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine. But after this is done, nationalist groups must come to an agreement in which each group will avoid the temptation of assigning blame to the entire group when one person acts as a lone wolf on behalf of a group that never condoned or encouraged his act. There are a lot of factors that come into play when a group is faced with having to hand over one who is linked to them, and looking back at history, peace between two nations was often contingent on one nation handing over a lone perpetrator. An example are the wars between the English settlers in New England and the Native American tribes in the 1600s. King Phillip, a native American chief of the Wampanoag tribe with members of other Native tribes, embarked on attacks against English

settlers at a time when the native Americans were just getting ready to adopt English customs as a result of King Phillip's father's positive relationship and alliance with the settlers. Its likely that growing up, Phillip could have had some run-ins and negative interactions with English settlers, and thus developed a hostile familiarity along the way. Obviously, with this contempt, King Phillip likened himself to be acting on behalf of all Native Americans, but would end up not only meeting resistance against the colonist, but also resistance from fellow Native Americans, who were eager to hand him over and end the conflict that he instigated. Yet this "handing over" always proves very difficult because in many cases, there is the issue of proving the perpetrator is guilty. We can look back at the Osama Bin Laden terror attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001. Following the attack, the United States issued an ultimatum to the Taliban government in Afghanistan, the country where Osama bin Laden took refuge over the years, to hand over Osama Bin Laden or face an invasion from the United States. The Taliban maintained that there was no proof that Osama Bin Laden was involved and also stated that they have a policy in which they do not hand over guests living in their country. From a peace perspective, had the Taliban decided to hand over Osama Bin Laden, no war would have ever taken place in Afghanistan. These examples highlight potential issues in getting groups to hand over members whom would act of their behalf or simply act but at the same time have strong ties to the group. There is a proof element involved. Another example is the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria by a Bosnian Serb nationalist in 1914. This was followed by Austria giving an ultimatum to Serbia in which Serbia would either allow Austria to conduct an internal investigation into the assassin's links or face an invasion of their country. One has to ask what would have happened had Serbia allowed Austria to conduct an investigation into the ties of the Serbian nationalist assassin who considered himself to be acting on behalf of all Serbians. There may have been no World War I. Obviously, one can gather that mistrust is a huge element in groups allowing another entity, or for that matter, an opposition entity to have access to their domain. Evidence can be tampered with, investigators can act without proper ethic simply for the sake of presenting justification to act militarily. In light of all these examples, there has to be something that would work in which both sides of the conflict would agree for measures that would mitigate the possibility of violent conflict, if it is the case that the perpetrator's actions were never directly encouraged or condoned by the suspected group. Another aspect to take into consideration is the chain of events leading up to the perpetrator's action. Citing those aforementioned examples, one can ask what were the instances in the life of those individual perpetrators, which led them to carry out their respective crimes. Was it a failed romance? Was it an instance of

being treated unfairly or discriminated against in legal or property matters? Was it public proclamations by a said group, of which alienated the person from the group, leading him to feel shunned. The simple feeling of being shunned is a greatly overlooked aspect that gives rise to dangerous rabble rousing. All of this is where one needs to think, and discourse needs to create a more intricate formula for measuring these components.

One thing is for certain, every aspect and every component thereof that has given rise to the climax of the Ukrainian conflict, must in the future, become cognizant of the lone radical element that can hijack and conflate their purposes. For instance, those who want to embark on public protests, must become aware that even if their intentions are peaceful, all it would take is one radical person to turn their demonstration into a violent riot. Same with nationalists groups. Even if their intentions are strictly defensive and traditionbased, they must remain aware of the dangers that one person can place them in, if that person should decide to go out and claim to act violently on their behalf. And ultimately, the Ukrainian government itself must, should the country stabilize again, make every effort to consider at every juncture the possibility of public outcry and, when after a certain amount of time has passed and things have cooled down so much that those in office may feel as though no one is looking anymore, reconsider their outlook and make sure that every step is one that keeps in mind a public insistent on its municipal authorities adhering to behaviors congruent to their standards. When things become stable and stagnant, no institution is immune to complacency. And it is this complacency, which can serve as the initial catalyst that sparks the unrest which leads to a drastic overhaul of the stability that had come to be taken for granted.

Chapter 1: The Genesis of Ukraine

Background information concerning the Ukrainians and their history provides context on what is currently happening with the Ukrainian-Russo conflict, which began with Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and has been ongoing as of 2021. It should be made clear that there is historically a fraternal backdrop that must be considered in terms of how the precipitating factors leading up to the conflict should be defined. This should provide clarity on the feasibility of any potential options explored for the purpose of initiating peace concessions between Ukraine and Russia.

Ukrainians define themselves as a distinct Eastern European race, different from that of Russians and Poles in both culture and temperament. They maintain a set of peculiarities that permeate their prevailing social and moral codes. There are profound differences in language, customs, traditions, religion, way of life and communal organizations that distinguish Ukrainians from other eastern European and Slavic races. However, when it comes to haplogroup distribution, researchers discovered that the genetic pattern of Ukrainians is near identical to that of Russians. The major Y-chromosome DNA haplogroup in the Ukrainian gene pool is R1a, and occurs in 43% of the Ukrainian population. This same haplogroup is found in 46% of the Russian demographic. This is why much of Ukraine's history both as far as relations with Russia and internal schism within Ukraine is concerned, is based largely on language and religion, and not so much on ethnicity. The genetically close connection between Russians and Ukrainians makes it impossible to argue on the grounds of genotype, especially when observing the historical nature of conflict between the two parties. *Fratris* is a more fitting term to apply to history of the East Slavic peoples.

For thousands of years, Ukrainians have lived in the areas they continue to inhabit. Starting in the 7th century in Kiev, Ukrainians established a governing body, and soon after, Kiev became the center of the economic, intellectual and political life in eastern Europe as the capital of a federation consisting of East Slavic, Baltic and Finnic peoples. This would last from the late 9th century until the mid-13th century. The federation was known as *Kievan Rus'*. Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus all claim ancestral origin from what comprised that region. In the 13th century, Kiev and much of eastern Ukraine was invaded and conquered by the Mongols. In the 14th century, a great part of western Ukraine was weakened by Crimean Tatar invasions before being conquered by the Poles in 1340. Tatars were any Turkic peoples originating from northern and central Asia. They inhabited parts of the Mongolian empire, but were not Mongols, as they spoke a Turkic language. Many of them would eventually establish settlements in what is now known today as Crimea. Tatars later

became part of the Mongol army. As the geographical overlay of eastern Europe continued to unfold, northern Ukraine became confederated to the Lithuanians and later conjoined with the Polish empire--via the Lithuanian king's marriage to the queen of Poland, to which after became the Poland-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Of course, this was arranged mainly for the sake of fending off Tatar invasions. This new primarily Orthodox population in the Commonwealth thereupon agreed to unite with the Catholic Church under the Union of Brest in 1595, which established Greek Catholicism as the primary church of the empire, and would be a key factor that triggers the eventual establishment of Ukraine's statehood.

In 1599, the de facto tsar of Russia, Boris Godunov, who considered himself a Muscovite (Muscovy was the name of the Russian Empire before the complete gathering of Rus' lands), ordered the construction of a series of fortifications in both the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine and southern Russia in order to help protect Russia from Crimean Tatar raids. These areas were inhabited by a group called the Don Cossacks, a predatory militant group feared by Russia. Russia at that time felt it would be strategically wise to fortify Don Cossack lands for the sake of protecting Russia from Tatar raids. Many Ukrainians had also sought refuge there, after attempting to flee failed Cossack uprisings in southern Ukraine.

The Union Of Brest served to alienate those inhabiting the rural frontier, in particular a group of Orthodox separatists known as the Zaporozhian Cossacks. The Don and Zaporozhian Cossacks were a single entity, but its political center was inhabited by the Zaporozhian group, who established their operations in southern Ukraine. Their numbers grew over the years and they also became a major asset to the Polish armies in their wars against the Ottomans. However, as the Cossacks grew in power, Poland became concerned and began restricting enlistments in the Cossack armies and also started withholding wages. This led to rebellion in 1637 and 1648, which allowed Ukraine to eventually gain their independence from the Poland-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This rebellion became known as the Khmelnytsky Uprising. The major insurrection, however, took place between 1648 and 1657. The Cossacks, which were a group of East Slavic Christian Orthodox separatists led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky, would wage a series of battles against Poland. The Cossacks felt their basic cultural standards were incompatible with the prevailing culture established in the Poland-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as a result of the Union of Brest established in 1595. Most Ukrainians and much of the Commonwealth at this time had become Greek Catholics or Uniates since the Union of Brest declared a religious shift from the Orthodox church to the Catholic Church. Bohdan Khmelnytsky had recently joined the Cossacks and rose quickly through their ranks. In 1646, he was embroiled in a land

dispute when his estate was being contested by the son of the military commander who controlled it. The Cossacks had their own system of estate management. Moreover, during the dispute, the son had sent associates to harass Khmelnytsky and conduct raids on the property. Consequently, Khmelnytsky's own son would be attacked and injured during the raids. Khmelnytsky proceeded to reach out to the Polish Crown for help, but they refused to get involved. So now angry at the Commonwealth, Khmelnytsky would seek help from the Cossacks and incite a rebellion. In 1648, he led a group of 500 Cossacks to the Zaporizhian Sich, overtaking it from the Commonwealth forces. (Zaporizhian Sichs were defense formations and fortress developments used by the Cossacks to acquire and defend land space and also claim statehood. A number of these were established and destroyed during the time of the Cossacks) Once there and after successfully defending it from being reclaimed by the Commonwealth troops, Khmelnytsky used his diplomatic skills to recruit more men. Subsequently, the Cossacks elected him to become Hetman, which is simply the highest ranking military commander. Khmelnytsky spent much of his energy building up his forces. He sent delegates to Crimea, entreating the Tatars to join him since they would now have a common enemy in the Commonwealth. Word of the uprising quickly spread throughout the region and many began to defect from the Commonwealth to join Khmelnytsky's forces. Khmelnytsky's forces went on to achieve decisive victories in the battles of Zhovti Vody and Korsun. Khmelnytsky then demanded that the Polish crown increase the number of registered Cossacks, return the Orthodox churches taken from the them, and also compensate them for wages withheld over a period of five years. Later, Khmelnytsky had his forces join a peasant uprising at the Battle of Pyliavtsi, which further weakened Polish grip over the empire. Consequently, Ukrainian Jews were forced to flee from town to town, as many of them were slaughtered during the uprising. Jews were accused by peasants of being agents for the Commonwealth. During this time, many Jews were landleasers and were thus seen by the peasant class as oppressors. After the Battles of Zbarazh and the Zboriv, Khmelnytsky halted his campaign after being promised by the new Polish king, John Casimir II, that the Cossacks would be granted various privileges throughout the empire. At this point, Khmelnytsky stated that he was the sole autocrat of Rus', claiming Ukraine, Podolia, Volhynia, and proclaiming that his "land and principality stretched as far as Lviv, Kholm, and Halych." The Treaty of Zborów established in August of 1649 permitted him to establish an independent Cossack principality in Ukraine. The treaty also banned Jews from working or living in camps where Cossack forces were stationed. When the fighting resumed in 1651, Khmelnytsky's forces suffered defeat at the battle of Berestechko, when they were betrayed by the Crimean Tatars, who

would arrest Khmenlnytsky as the Polish advanced. The Cossacks suffered 30,000 casualties, and after the battle, the Crimean Tatars released Khmenlnytsky, forcing him to sign Treaty of Bila Tserkva, which reduced the number of registered Cossacks. The conflict now consisted of 3 parties against each other: The Cossacks, the Crimean Tatars, and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Tatars allowed neither side to prevail during the conflict. Meanwhile, the Treaty of Bila Tserkva had not been ratified by the Polish parliament. So at the battle of Batih, the Tatars rejoined the Cossacks, helping them achieve victory before handing over to them, 8000 Polish-Lithuanian prisoners whom the Cossacks would slaughter en masse. The Cossacks had ultimately established Ukraine as independent from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under Khmelnytsky.

Seeking legitimacy and protection for Ukraine, Khmelnytsky sought alliance with foreign government. He first reached out to the Ottoman Sultan in 1651, but after significant disapproval among the Cossacks, Khmelnytsky and the Cossacks agreed to accept overlordship of the Tsar of Russia, Alexei Mikhailovich. In 1654, under the Treaty of Pereyaslav, the Cossacks pledged their allegiance to Russia(Muscovy). Now fearing Russia's growing influence, the Tatars subsequently joined the Polish. With the help of Russia, Ukraine was now able to fight off Tatar and Polish raids. After Khmelnytsky's death and subsequent infighting amongst the Cossack elite, Russia and Poland would divide the Ukrainian lands in 1667. Poland received the territories west of the Dnipro, while Russia would get Kiev and lands east of the Dnipro. The PolishLithuanian Commonwealth met a slow demise, eventually becoming divided amongst Russia, Prussia, and Austria in the 18th century. During the time proceeding the 1654 Russia-Ukraine alliance, many Russians began to settle in eastern and southern Ukraine.

Much of Russia's historical discourse points to the Treaty of Pereyaslav in 1654 as Ukraine's attempt to reunify with Russia and complete the gathering of Rus' lands. This was considered to be an attempt at "eternal union." Ukrainian intellectuals argue that Khmelnytsky's brief rule was the establishment of a "state", while at the same time downplaying the role Cossack Orthodoxy played in Khmelnytsky's decision to make Ukraine a protectorate of Muscovy. However, Ukrainians asses correctly that unions between two states in which each state maintained its legal and administrative autonomy were common in medieval Europe.

Chapter 2: The Genesis of Russia

The Russians are known to have originated from the East Slavic demographic in ancient Kiev, before moving to western Russia towards present-day Suzdal and Murom. Another wave of migration by East Slavs to western Russia originated from Polotsk enroute towards Novgorod and Rostov. From the 7th century, East Slavs made up the bulk of the population in western Russia. In 860, the Rus' had invaded Constantinople, which was then part of the Byzantine empire. The Rus' seized the opportunity to attack while the Byzantines were preoccupied with their conflict against the advancing Arabs in Asia Minor. The Byzantines, however, quickly returned and the Rus' immediately withdrew from Constantinople. Afterwards in 863, the Patriarch of the Byzantine empire, Photius, would send missionaries Cyril and Methodius to the Rus' to convert the Slavs to Christianity. Both Cyril and Methodius understood the Slavic language and helped the Slavs establish their Glagolitic alphabet, which was later replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet, which resembled loosely the Greek alphabet and was developed in Bulgaria by monks in Ohrid and Preslav. By 867, the Rus' had accepted a bishop. This would be the birth of Russia's eventual establishment of Orthodox Christianity.

Russians began their history in 862 when the Rus' state was first formed in the north near Novgorod. It was then ruled by Varangians(Vikings). The Slavic and Finnic tribes drove out the Varangians, but shortly afterwards invited them back due to both the lack of structure and continuous in-fighting amongst the tribes. They elected Rurick, a Varangian chieftain, to rule over their Rus' territory. At that time, territories of the East Slavs were divided between the Varangians and the Khazars. In 882, when Prince Oleg of Novgorod seized Kiev, the northern and southern lands of the Eastern Slavs became united under a single authority, as Oleg sought to bolster defenses against Khazar conquest. Southern expansion of the Rus' placed considerable pressure on the Khazars, and after Oleg gained access to the Black Sea, the Khazars lost much of their influence in the region as Oleg launched excursions into Khazar territories along the sea coast and eventually established trade agreements with the Byzantine empire in 907 and 911. In 912, Igor would assume the throne of Kiev. Igor was thought to be the son of Rurik, the Viking chieftain ruler of the Rus' people. Regardless, his reign was largely unsuccessful. He embarked on an expedition to Transcaucasia, which upended much of his forces. His ships were set fire in another expedition to Byzantium, where he attempted to catch Byzantium off-guard as they fought the Arabs in the Mediterranean. During the conflict, the Byzantine emperor Romanos I Lekapenos devised a plan in which his ships would mount flamethrowers known as the Greek

Fire to their ships and use them to attack Igor's fleet. This led to many of Igor's forces and ships getting destroyed. A second attack was devised by Igor and involved raiding the provinces of Bithynia and Paphlagonia, which are east of Constantinople. However, the Byzantines would flank them and force Igor to retreat. They also ambushed Igor's forces as they traveled back to Kiev, setting afire more of their ships using the Greek Fire. Igor mounted one more assault in 944, using both fleet and foot soldiers to attack Constantinople. But this time when the Byzantine emperor got word of this large-scale attack underway, he instead chose to offer renewed trade concessions. Still and all, this subsequent treaty established in 944 was less advantageous than the one Oleg obtained from Byzantium in 911. In 945, Igor and Byzantium finally signed a peace treaty, ending the Rus'-Byzantine War. Ultimately, Igor did find success in expanding Kiev's dominion over the Pechenegs, a nomadic Turkic peoples often employed as mercenaries. He also expanded the authority of Kiev over the east Slavic tribe, Drevlyane. Igor was later killed by the Drevlyane after attempting to collect tribute from them. The trade relationship established by Oleg and Igor with Byzantium would eventually give way to the Christianization of the Rus' under Vladimir the Great in 988.

After Igor's death, his son, Sviatoslav I, succeeded him. Sviatoslav was vital in expanding Rus' control over the Volga valley and the Pontic steppe region. He also conquered Khazaria, which was perhaps at that time one of the strongest kingdoms in eastern Europe. As the Rus'-Byzantine treaty established by Igor in 945 was holding steady, Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros Phokas invited Sviatoslav to help him fight against the Bulgarians in the Baltic region in 968. Sviatoslav agreed and launched a successful campaign against the Bulgarians, defeating Bulgarian ruler Boris II and conquering all of northern Bulgaria. However, this expedition would leave Kiev open to attack. So the Byzantines decided to seize the opportunity by persuading and bribing the Pechenegs to attack Kiev. Once Sviatoslav got wind of this, he promptly returned to Kiev and repelled the Pecheneg invasion. Consequently, as a result of Byzantine's treachery, Sviatoslav refused to hand over to them those lands he conquered in the Balkans. He instead embarked on new conquests there, and captured the city of Philippopolis. Meanwhile, Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros Phokas would be overthrown by John Tzimiskes, who then became the new emperor. After Tzimiskes implored Sviatoslav to withdraw his forces from Bulgaria, Sviatoslav mobilized his men for an invasion of Constantinople and seized Adrianople. However, this occupation was short-lived, as the Byzantines would repel Sviatoslav's forces with a counteroffensive. Later, Tzimiskes and his army occupied Bulgaria and convinced Sviatoslav to withdraw from the Balkans in exchange for safe passage home. But nevertheless, fearing

that Sviatoslav would regroup, the Byzantine emperor persuaded the Pecheneg Kurya to ambush and kill Sviatoslav as he traveled back to Kiev. After Sviatoslav was killed in 972, his 3 sons Oleg, Yaropolk, and Vladimir would contend for the throne. It is here we see fratricide become a major theme in Kievan Rus' affairs.

Vladimir came to power in Kiev after reclaiming Novgorod from his brother Yaropolik, who seized Rus' after murdering his older brother, Oleg. After Yaropolik's fratricide, Vladimir, who was at that time the prince of Novgorod, was forced to flee to Scandinavia. He then managed to gather an army of Vikings in Norway and reclaim Rus' from Yaropolik. During his reign, after expanding the territories of the Rus', Vladimir wanted to unite his empire under one religion because much of Kiev was already comprised of many pagan religions. So Vladimir sent envoys to study religion in neighboring countries that were looking to persuade the Rus' to accept their faith systems. His envoys considered the Islamic, Jewish, and Christian faiths, but ultimately settled on Christianity after visiting Constantinople and being awestruck at the splendor of the cathedrals there. Prior to this, Vladimir practiced Slavic paganism. After seizing the town of Chersonesos in Crimea, Vladimir requested to marry Byzantine emperor Basil II's sister, Anna, and in order to appease the Christians in Byzantium who felt it absurd for a pagan to marry a Byzantine imperial princess, Vladimir chose to get baptized at Chersonesos before making his wedding vows. When he returned to Kiev, he destroyed all the pagan monuments and established Christianity as the religion of the Rus'. He also built "the Church of the Tithes," and dedicated it to St. Basil. The Christianity established in Kiev would eventually become known as The Metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus' and would operate under the jurisdiction of Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Vladimir was succeeded by his son Sviatopolk I, whom Vladimir had imprisoned for plotting his overthrow. When Vladimir died in 1015, news of his death was concealed from Sviatopolk to keep him from claiming the throne. However, when word of Vladimir's death did reach Sviatopolk, he quickly seized power in Kiev. He then moved to kill his brothers, Boris, Gleb, and Sviatoslav—all of whom he considered a threat to his power. (We see this fratricidal element arise once again, indicating that this is becoming a growing theme in the historical development of east Slavic ethnology.) However, word of the fratricide would reach Vladimir's other son, Yaroslav, who was then prince of Novgorod. With the backing of the citizens of Novgorod and the Vikings, Yaroslav waged war against Sviatopolk and defeated him in 1016, forcing Sviatopolk to flee to Poland. There, however, Sviatopolk gathered an army and returned to Kiev in 1018 and reclaimed it from Yaroslav. But Yaroslav would return and eventually defeat Sviatopolk for good in 1019.

Much of Yaroslav's rule centered around reducing Byzantine's influence on Kiev. He went on to conquer a number of cities from the Poles, such as the Cherven cities, and also establish an alliance with the Polish king, Casimir I, who would marry Yaroslav's sister, Maria in exchange for recognizing the Cherven cities as a part of Kiev. Yaroslav ended up marrying the daughter of king Olof of Sweden. After eliminating the Pecheneg threat to Kiev in 1037, Yaroslav then launched a campaign against the Byzantine empire by invading Constantinople in 1043. But after defeating the Byzantine fleet, Yaroslav's ships encountered fierce storms at sea, causing them to return to Kiev empty-handed. The legacy of Yaroslav was the continued defense of Kiev and the construction of new monuments: the Saint Sophia Cathedral, monasteries of St. George and St. Irene, and also the Golden Gate of Kiev. Yaroslav was succeeded by his 3 older sons, Izyaslav, Sviatoslav, and Vsevolod. Together, they formed the Yaroslavichi triumvirate, which ruled for 20 years. Part of the deal with Poland that was orchestrated during Yaroslav's reign—which held that in exchange for Poland recognizing the Cherven cities as Kiev territory, the Polish King Casimir I would marry Yaroslav's sister, Anna—was that Iziaslav, Yaroslav's son, would marry Casimir's sister Gertrude. After this was arranged, Iziaslav went on to have three sons, Yaropolk, Mstislav and Sviatopolk. Later, Iziaslav was removed from power during an uprising in 1068, when the Polovtsy tribe broke through the defensive lines established by Iziaslav's father. After being unable to stop the Polovtsy raids on Kiev, Iziaslav was removed from power by a Kievan mob, who replaced him with Prince Vseslav of Polotsk, whom Iziaslav had recently imprisoned. The mob was upset that Iziaslav would not give them arms to fight against the Polovtsy. Consequently, Iziaslav fled to Poland. After his brother Sviatoslav managed to subdue the Polovtsy raids, Iziaslav returned to the throne in 1069 with the aid of the Polish army. He would, however, in just a few years be deposed by his brothers in 1073, which essentially broke up the triumvirate and reignited the ongoing fratricidal theme that defined the ascension to power of previous reigns. For the time being, Sviatoslav had taken over briefly, but Iziaslav was able to remain in contention by seeking help from the German king Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor, who would crown him king of Rus' in 1075. In 1076, Iziaslav returned to Kiev and reclaimed the throne. Sviatoslav, however, had already died and had been succeeded by his brother, Vsevolod Iaroslavich. When Iziaslav reclaimed the throne, he made a deal with Vsevolod in which Vsevolod would renounce Kiev, but receive Chernigov. But Oleg, Sviatoslav's son, as a result of not getting along with Vsevolod, gathered an army of Polovtsy and drove Vsevolod out of Chernigov. Subsequently, Vsevolod went to Iziaslav for help and both would join forces and march against Chernigov, but the citizens there resisted

and Iziaslav would later die during the conflict. Oleg was eventually forced to retreat from Chernigov, allowing Vsevolod to claim the throne. Vsevolod then proceeded to unite Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereyaslavl as core principalities, and also place his oldest son, Vladimir Monomach, in charge of administration in Chernigov. Vsevolod died in 1093 and was succeeded by Iziaslav's son, Sviatopolk II. After Oleg I reclaimed Chernigov, Sviatopolk and Monomach became embroiled in a long internecine struggle against Oleg. Sviatopolk died in 1113 and was replaced by his successor, Vladimir Monomach(Vladimir II), who would become a saint of the Eastern Orthodox Church. He put forth a number of reforms that stabilized the political climate in the Rus'. His reign between 1113 and 1125 is considered by many to be the last of the golden years of Kiev. He was later succeeded by his son, Mstislav I, who would spend much of his life in constant battle against the Polovtsy, Estonians, Lithuanians, and the principedom of Polotsk. He would also be the last ruler of a united Rus' kingdom. Mstislav died in 1132 at the age of 55 and was succeeded by his brother, Yaropolk II.

During his reign, Yaropolk II was occasionally undermined by his brothers. For example, after Yaropolk appointed his nephew, Vsevolod Mstislavich, then prince of Novgorod, to succeed him at the Pereyaslav principality, Yaropolk's half-brother Dolgoruki would later drive out Vsevolod. Yaropolk then appointed his son, Iziaslav Mstislavich,(who also received Turov) to Pereyaslav. This was also contested. Yaropolk and Dolgoruki wouldn't come to an accordance until 1134, when they both agreed that Yaropolk's brother, Viacheslav Vladimirovich, would replace Iziaslav and take the throne of Pereyaslav. When it came to Vsevolod, the people of Novgorod were angry at him for accepting the assignment to Pereyaslav, considering it a betrayal since Vsevolod had taken an oath to die in Novgorod. So when Vsevolod attempted to return there as prince after Yaropolk decided to appoint Viacheslav to Pereyaslav, the Novgorodians rejected him. This led to a paradigm shift in Novgorod, to which all throughout the next century, Novgorodians would exert considerable influence, dismissing and inviting a number of princes. Yaropolk died in 1139 and was succeeded by Viacheslav Vladimirovich, who was after a short time driven out by Vsevolod II. Vsevolod II was then succeeded by Igor II.

Igor II encountered significant disapproval among the populace regarding his ascension to the throne due to the fact that he was largely regarded as corrupt and greedy. Because of this sentiment, his cousin, Iziaslav II, was subsequently invited to take the throne from Igor. After Iziaslav defeated Igor, he had him thrown in a pit, where his health proceeded to deteriorate and after complaining of illness, Igor requested that he instead be allowed to become a monk. After Iziaslav agreed and ordered his release, Igor went on to the

monastery at St. Feodor to take his monastic vows. However, after a short period of time, he was killed by a mob after being suspected of plotting to reclaim the throne from Iziaslav. His lifeless corpse became associated with a number of miracles and he was eventually made a saint. Iziaslav II died in 1154. Yuri Dolgoruki would subsequently seize power in Kiev, but only briefly, before being poisoned to death at a Kievan feast in 1157. His reign was followed by Rostislav I's, but after one week, Rostislav was driven out by Iziaslav III. Mstislav II would then claim the throne later that year in 1157 and remain in power until 1169, when Kiev was seized by Andrey Bogolyubsky, son of Yuri Dolgoruki. Mstislav was exiled to Byzantium before dying in 1172.

Andrey moved to appoint his brother, Gleb, as prince of Kiev and attempted to reunify all the Rus' lands, but after his brother Gleb died in 1171, Andrey lost much of his grip over Kiev. His reign was marked by moving his capitol from Kiev to Vladimir, along with the construction of a number of churches and monasteries there. One in particular was the Assumption Cathedral. As a result of a plot orchestrated by boyars of Suzdal and Rostov, Andrey was killed as he lay in bed on June 29, 1174. He was succeeded by Mikhail of Vladimir, oldest son of Yuri Dolgoruki.

In fear of the boyars, Mikhail would flee Vladimir for Chernigov. Andrey's nephew, Roman I, was installed before being ousted as Mikhail returned to reclaim the throne in 1175. Mikhail thereafter died in 1176 and was succeeded by his brother, Vsevolod III, who would force the boyars into submission and further develop the new capital, Vladimir. He embarked upon several raids, such as the one in Volga Bulgaria. He appointed princes in Novgorod and wed his daughters to princes in Kiev and Chernigov. He eventually died in April of 1212. But before his death, Vsevolod intended for his son, Yuri, to succeed him in Rostov, while his other son, Konstantin, would succeed him in Vladimir. However, Konstantin demanded both Rostov and Vladimir. This led to Vsevolod disinheriting him and passing his throne to Yuri. Unsurprisingly, after Yuri ascended to the throne following Vsevolod's death, Konstantin subsequently moved to oust him from Vladimir. After doing so, he did, however, allow Yuri to have Rostov. Konstantin would die 2 years later, which then allowed Yuri to reclaim Vladimir. Unfortunately, it was during Yuri's reign that the Mongols began their invasion of the region. First, the Mongols advanced into Russia in 1232 and then into Vladimir in 1237. Yuri was killed in the battle of Sit River in 1238 as Mongol forces defeated the Vladimir-Suzdal armies. After his death, Yuri's younger brother, Yaroslav II, moved to Vladimir from Kiev and was crowned grand prince of Vladimir. After Vladimir was destroyed by the Mongols, Yaroslav met with the then leader of the Mongols, Batu Khan in 1243 at his capital, Sarai and was allowed to return to

Vladimir. After the Mongols gained control of Kievan Rus', appointments to the throne in Vladimir had to be approved by the Khan. Two years later, Yaroslav was invited to conference with Güyük Khan in Karakorum, but was poisoned there and would die a week later. After Yaroslav's death, Sviatoslav III was appointed ruler of Vladimir, but his reign was short lived as he would be ousted by his nephew, Mikhail Khorobrit of Moscow. This occurred as Andrey II was actually the one approved by Guyuk Khan to be the next grand duke of Vladimir. And so it was the case that upon returning to Vladimir from Karakorum, Mongolia after receiving his appointment, Andrey discovered that the throne was already occupied by Mikhail. Ultimately, Mikhail would be killed in battle with the Lithuanians months later. When Andrey took power, he attempted to exert some independence from the Great Horde of the Mongols. He went on to marry the daughter of Danylo of Halych. Danylo was despised by the Mongols. Meanwhile, Sviatoslav, with Alexander Nevsky, approached the Horde asking to be appointed back to the throne. Nevsky reported that Andrey was withholding tribute from the Horde. As a result of this meeting, the Mongols decided to send a military expedition to remove Andrey from power after hearing of this infidelity. But In 1256, Andrey would travel to Sarai and ask for pardon for his infraction and when he returned to Vladimir, Nevsky assigned him the eastern territories of Vladimir, which included the towns of Nizhny Novgorod and Gorodets on the Volga. When Nevsky died, Andrey attempted to claim all of Vladimir, but this attempt was stifled by Yaroslav of Tver, his younger brother, whom the Great Horde had already decided to appoint as the grand duke of Vladimir. Andrey was forced to settle in Novgorod. Yaroslav died in 1271 and was succeeded in Vladimir by Vasily of Kostroma, who henceforth also ascended to the throne in Novgorod. He would rule until 1276 and be succeeded by Dmitri Alexanderovich.

Dmitri had previously been put in charge of Novgorod by his father Alexander Nevsky in 1259. But after Nevsky died, the Novgorodians expelled Dmitri due to his young age. Novgorodians had become increasingly more influential in dismissing and assigning princes. In previous times, the prince of Kiev or Vladimir would appoint the prince of Novgorod, but since 1139, the Novgorodians, if aggrieved, would invite their choice to come to Novgorod and seize the throne. After a decade of wrestling with his uncles for the throne in Novgorod, Dmitri was finally afforded the opportunity to ascend to power in both Novgorod and Vladimir, when both his uncles, Yaroslav III and Vasily of Kostroma died in 1276. Dmitri would later establish a fortress called Korporye, to the dismay of the Novgorodians, who eventually forced him out of Novgorod. As Dmitri attempted to ease tensions with the Novgorodians, his younger brother, Andrey of Gorodets, went to the Golden Horde to get

permission to replace Dmitri as grand duke of Vladimir. So in 1281, Andrey returned to Russia and seized Pereyaslav and forced Dmitri to flee to Scandinavia. After claiming the throne in Vladimir, Andrey was invited by the Novgorodians to take the throne in Novgorod. In the mean time, after establishing an alliance with Nogai Khan, Dmitri was reinstated as grand duke of Vladimir in 1283. However, Andrey would battle with Dmitri for the Vladimir throne over the next decade, finally reclaiming it in 1293. From that point over the next decade, Andrey was engaged in conflict with a coalition organized by Daniel of Moscow, Mikhail of Tver, and Ivan of Pereslavl looking to re-institute the rota system of collateral succession. Andrey ruled until 1304.

After Andrey died, Mikhail would become grand prince of Vladimir in accordance with the rota system of collateral succession. He was also confirmed by the khan of the Golden Horde. He would then go on to be accepted as the Prince of Novgorod. However, once there, Mikhail ran into conflict with the Novgorodians and responded by proceeding to cut off grain shipments to the city. This act would lead to Moscow becoming more influential throughout the empire than Vladimir since it was the case that while Mikhail was away, Yuri of Moscow stepped in to assume control of affairs in Novgorod. As Mikhail would again reclaim control with Mongol help in 1316, the Khan in Sarai appointed Yuri of Moscow to replace Mikhail as grand prince of Vladimir. To enforce the decree, the Mongols provided military support to Yuri. However, Mikhail defeated Yuri and captured his wife, who was also the khan's sister. She later died in Mikhail's custody. Kavgadii, who was released by Mikhail, returned to Sarai and reported that it was Mikhail who ordered the murder of the khan's sister and subverted the Mongol decree. The Great Horde then summoned Mikhail and executed him in 1318. Still and all, Mikhail's piousness during this ordeal earned him Sainthood in the Russian Orthodox Church.

In 1319, Yuri came to power but was opposed by Mikhail's son "Dmitri the Terrible Eyes", who reported to the Horde that Yuri was misappropriating tributes due to them. So when Yuri was summoned by the khan, Dmitri killed him. Subsequently, Dmitri was executed by the Horde for such an act. After the death of his older brother, Yuri, Ivan I gained control over the principality of Moscow, and would also be instated as grand prince of Vladimir by the Great Horde. Thus Ivan I had little trouble cooperating with the Mongols, collecting tribute from the other Russian principalities on their behalf.

In 1327, the residency of grand prince of Vladimir was moved to Moscow, which then solidified Moscow's influence over the region in what became known as the state of Muscovy. This is where East Slavic history and ethnology would segue or branch off into the development of Russian cultural identity. In the 14th century, the grand princes of

Muscovy would attempt to regather all the Rus' lands. This effort was most demonstrated during the reign of Ivan III. He conquered Novgorod in 1478 and Tver in 1485. In 1480, Mongol influence over Muscovy came to an end and Muscovy gained sovereignty for all Rus' lands, and by the early 1500s, nearly all of Rus' had become united. Ivan would acquire part of Ryazan and the submission of the princes of Rostov and Yaroslavl. The city of Pskov was later conquered by his son, Vasiliy III. Ivan III was the first Muscovite ruler to label himself "tsar" and "Ruler of all Rus'." He battled with Lithuania for control over former principalities of Kievan Rus' and was able to advance westward and expand Muscovy's dominance. As Muscovy began to solidify, all the rulers within Muscovy came to consider it to be their collective territory. Princes would claim jurisdiction and influence over certain areas. Ivan III, however, insisted that lesser princes yield to the grand prince of Muscovy and his descendants as the undisputed authority over military, judicial and foreign affairs. Muscovite rulers would slowly evolve into a powerful autocrat known as a "tsar." "Tsar" was to be considered on equal footing with other terms used to describe powerful rulers, such as emperor or khan. After Ivan III wed Sophia Paleologue, who was the niece of the Byzantine emperor, Muscovy appropriated many symbols and customs of Byzantine.

Under Ivan III, "tsar" as an autocrat implied independent ruler. When Ivan IV came to power, it would come to mean absolute and unlimited power. In 1533, Ivan IV became "tsar" and was recognized by the Orthodox Church. A monk would state that when Constantinople capitulated to the Ottomans in 1453, the tsar of Muscovy would have a legitimate claim as official Orthodox ruler and that Moscow would have the right to consider itself a successor to other central bases of operations for Christianity, such as Rome and Constantinople. This outlook shaped the Russian view of Orthodoxy. Under Ivan IV, tsardom reached a zenith in terms of its level of power. Ivan IV would thus later become known as Ivan the Terrible, as he stretched the limits of his power to an enormous degree. Combined with his mental instability, Ivan the Terrible went on orchestrate extreme acts of violence. He became grand prince of Muscovy in 1533 as a child, during which time boyars attempted to serve as regency until he would come of age in 1547. And in 1547 when his time did come, Ivan IV assumed the title "Tsar and Grand Duke of all Rus'" and his coronation was reminiscent of those used in the coronation of Byzantine emperors. His reign marked the change from the Grand Duchy of Moscow into "Tsardom of Russia." Ivan IV instituted a number of reforms for the law code, the military, and the local government, all intended to fortify Muscovy from neighboring enemies. But in the late 1550s, Ivan would become hostile towards his associates and officials. After dividing Muscovy into both a private and public domain, Ivan relegated the private domain for the bulk of

his terror and cruelty. His agents moved to execute anyone that raised suspicion in Ivan. Ivan's ire against the boyars would lead to him breaking down their influence in Muscovy affairs. He ordered the confiscation of their property and had many of them publicly executed. This policy was called "oprichnina." Boyars were normally instrumental in developing Muscovy and when they were suppressed by Ivan, much of the empire began to suffer. Trade became less efficient and peasants attempted to leave Muscovy. This would give way to the origins of legal serfdom, tying peasants to their land. In 1572, Ivan scaled back his oprichnina policies. Despite the brutal domestic policy of Ivan IV, Muscovy continued to expand. In 1552, Ivan conquered Kazan' Khanate on the middle Volga and afterwards, he would seize the Astrakhan' Khanate. As a result, Muscovy gained access to the Volga River and Central Asia. Ivan IV's rule marked the end of Muscovy and the beginning of what we have come to know as "Russia."

Chapter 3: Intellectual Discourse

Both Russian and Ukrainian nationalists are divided on the legacy of Kievan Rus'. In order to affirm the historical foundations of their statehood, Ukrainian nationalists often argue that they maintain the continued ethnic and authentic cultural tradition of the old Kievan Rus', while Russia, formerly Muscovy, is made up of people descended from Finno-Ugric tribes; that as cultural influence of Kiev later extended to Vladimir and then to Moscow, the eventual domination of the region by Mongols greatly altered and washed out much of the original east Slavic DNA signature that existed in Ancient Kiev. On the other hand, Russian nationalist historians argue that political, linguistic, and religious legitimacy was passed onto Moscow. They further argue that when the Mongols conquered Kiev, many of the core East Slavic components of Kievan Rus' fled to Russia to escape the Great Horde, while those who remained became assimilated and mixed in with other races as a result of Polish-Lithuanian dominance, leaving the true cultural tradition in Moscow. Another aspect of the debate over Kievan Rus' is the extent of Muscovy's attempt to gather the lands of Rus'. The fact that Muscovite grand princes were committed to this goal affirms that Muscovy was the legitimate successor of Kievan Rus'. This, along with the fact that the grand princes of Moscow were descendants of Vladimir the Great and other Rus' rulers. According to Russian intellectuals, Ukraine was never really a true state, but a "Little Russian" extension of the Russian race, ultimately by way of providence, destined to fall under the dominion of Muscovy. During the Soviet Union era, it was taught that Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians are historically "brother nations" all originating from ancient Kievan Rus'. Over the course of time, the Soviet Union would present Russians as the big brother of the group. Nonetheless, the notion of brother easily fosters ideas that Ukraine is not fundamentally an independent entity. Yet this type of discourse is not completely shunned by the Ukrainian perspective. There is the existence of a Ukrainian nationalist movement called the Ukrainian National Assembly and the linked Ukrainian Self-Defense Organization, which agrees on the unity of East Slavic peoples. However this group believes that Ukraine, not Russia is entitled to being the dominant state of the Rus' peoples since the original center of the Kievan Rus' empire was Kiev. There are other intellectuals that consider the notion of Kievan Rus' being either Russian or Ukrainian to be a far-fetched one.

After the Mongols invaded Kievan Rus' in the 13th century, the seat of the Metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus' became split between Grand Duchy of Moscow in Moscow and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in Vilnius. As Kiev began to lose its influence over the Rus' territories, the seat of the Metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus' would

first be moved to Vladimir in 1299, before being moved to Moscow in 1325, where the patriarch of Constantinople would continue to appoint the Metropolitan. The name was subsequently changed to the Metropolitan of Kiev, Galicia and all Rus'. However, in 1458, the Grand Duchy of Moscow decided to start appointing their own metropolitans without approval of the Constantinople patriarch. This fomented the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church. With The Union of Brest in 1595-1596, the Metropolitan of Kiev, Galicia and all Rus' broke from the Eastern Orthodox church and submitted to the Pope of Rome. This established the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church or Uniate Church. The Russian Orthodox would remain in Moscow. Scholars are largely unsettled on what tribes inhabited the eastern Slav territories first. Some contend that the Vikings or Varagians were there before the Slavic and Finnic peoples, whom they believe later assimilated with the Varagians. Others insist there is evidence that Slavs were there before the Vikings arrived. Those East Slavs who remained in Kiev and much of Ukraine insisted that they are ethnically distinct from the Russians who are also of East Slavic origin, asserting that present day Russia only appropriated the name "Russia" after the Treaty of Pereyaslav in 1654. Prior to that, Russia was known as Muscovy. Muscovy's expansion was premised on a gathering of Rus' lands. When this was complete, Muscovy changed the name to Russia. However, Ukrainians point out that the treaty with Muscovy established Ukraine as an independent nation with a freely chosen supreme head called a "hetman." The treaty also gave Ukraine the right to engage in diplomatic relations with other states, along with the freedom to exercise free trade with all foreign nations. Not only that, but also the right to maintain an independent judicial system; the right to choose a leader for the army, and finally the right to establish an independent Ukrainian Church. When it became clear that Muscovy would not honor those terms, Ukraine rebelled. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, Russia and Poland partitioned Ukraine and made the Dnieper the frontier between their two empires. Left-bank Ukraine belonged to the Tsardom of Russia and Right-bank Ukraine belonged to Poland-Lithuania.

Chapter 4: End of the Hetmanate and start of Russification

Peter I, the Tsar of Russia from 1682 – 1725, attempted to centralize his control over the empire by implementing reforms to the Russian army after Russia lost significant territory in the Great Northern War. The Great Northern War was Russia's battle for supremacy in Eastern, Central and Northern Europe against the Swedish Empire, which was then the leading power in the Baltic region. Russia was invaded by Sweden, but knowing of this in advance, Russian forces retreated as the Swedish army advanced into Hrodna. Russia employed a scorchedearth policy, burning buildings and crops before the Swedish forces would arrive, minimizing resources available to them when winter came around. Thus, the winter of 1709 would consequently deplete Swedish forces significantly. Just prior to this, Russia was attempting to implement reforms to the Russian army, which consequently drew the ire of Ukraine, and caused rebellion to ensue. Ivan Mazepa, the leader of this rebellion, felt that this measure taken by Peter I, who is more famously known in historical literature as Peter the Great, would threaten the autonomy of the Cossack Hetmanate; an autonomy granted to them by the Treaty of Pereyaslav in 1654. The move to centralize the Russian army forced the Cossack forces to fight in distant wars on behalf of Russia, leaving their own territory open to Tatar and Polish raids. After suffering heavy casualties as a result of this new arrangement in which Cossack forces would fight distant battles while being ill-equipped to adapt to a warfare that was becoming increasingly advanced, Mazepa came under intense scrutiny and numerous demands were made for him to be replaced with a Russian general. Mazepa had become Hetman of Left Bank Ukraine in 1687 after ousting Ivan Samoylovych, whom he accused of attempting to secede from the Russian Empire. After Right-bank Ukraine launched an uprising against Poland, Russia allowed Mazepa to intervene. Mazepa was able to secure a large portion of Right-bank Ukraine from the Polish. Poland had been considerably weakened by an invasion of Swedish king Charles XII. And when the Swedish king secured the election of Stanisław I Leszczyński to the Polish kingship in 1705, both Polish and Swedish forces attempted to invade Ukraine. Russia knowing in advance of this plan, declined to protect Ukraine from the invasion. Mazepa considered this a violation of the Treaty of Pereyaslav. So when the Polish and Swedish forces advanced on Ukraine in 1708, Mazepa decided to join forces with them in the hopes of transferring control of Ukraine to Sweden. However, only 3000 Cossacks followed him. The rest remained loyal to the Tsardom of Russia. This rebellion that was led by Mazepa allied with Sweden was quelled by Peter the Great in 1709 at the Battle of Poltava. After the time of Mazepa, Russia launched a brutal policy of repression, which was pursued openly and

ruthlessly. Peter instituted oversight measures over the autonomous Ukrainian administration. Everything pertaining to the administration of the hetman chancellery had to pass through the hands and watchful eyes of Muscovite officers. In 1722, the power of the hetmans was rendered ineffectual. In 1764, Catherine II completely abolished the office of the hetman.

Slowly, the assertion of Ukrainian national identity became more oppressed in Ukraine. In 1720, Russia restricted the printing of Ukrainian books and literature. In 1775, the "Zaporogian Sich," was destroyed. The "Zaporogian Sich" was statehood for the Cossacks from the 1500s to the 1700s, and were located in southeastern Ukraine. They were established to defend against Crimean Tatar raids. The Cossacks, a Ukrainian self-defense force, would construct a number of fortifications aimed at stopping Tatar hordes, and ultimately unify those fortifications to form a central fortress, the "Zaporogian Sich." The first Zaporizhian Sichs were established on the island of Small (Mala) Khortytsia and near the modern city of Marhanets. Tatar forces destroyed both in 1558 and 1593 respectively. A third sich was built on the Bazavluk island. It lasted until 1638, when a Polish expeditionary force—in response to a Cossack uprising—destroyed it. These settlements constituted an early proto-state. In 1648, Bohdan Khmelnytsky took control of a sich at Mykityn Rih, near present-day Nikopol in order to conduct an uprising against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This resulted in the establishment of the first Cossack Hetmanate. The Sich changed location on numerous occasions and was finally destroyed in 1775 by Russian General Peter Tekeli on direct orders from Catherine II. By 1780, the Cossacks were only organizing on a voluntary basis, defending Ukraine from Turkish raids during the Russo-Turkish War which began in 1787 and lasted until 1793. The Russians would begin to resettle the Cossacks along the Kuban River. Thus in the 1800s, the Cossacks would eventually change their name to the Kuban Cossacks. But beginning in 1783, the Cossacks and peasants of Ukraine became subjected to serfdom by the Russian government. Serfdom was a form of indentured servitude that restricted peasants to their land. They would work the land, but be unable to leave. However, unlike slavery, they had some protections of the law, as they could not be bought or sold individually. They were simply parcel of the land and sold together with the land. Serfs that occupied a plot of land was subject to the lord who owned it, and had to work under his authority, but in return for this servitude, the serfs could cultivate a portion of the land in order to try and maintain their own sustenance. Much of serfdom was voluntary since during a famine, the only options were to starve or become a serf. And much of the aristocracy that profited from serfdom was Russian. During this time, Russia also forced the assimilation of the Ukrainian people into Russian culture. Serfs were

forced to speak Russian and accept Russian political ideals. This was a crushing blow to Ukrainian resistance to assimilation. Russification of Ukraine would remain a strong component of Russian and Soviet policy until 1991.

After abolishing the Cossack Hetmanate, Catherine II converted it to what was called “Little Russia.” It was divided into to the vice regencies: Kyiv, Chernihiv and Novhorod-Siverskyi. Catherine II’s justification for claiming territories was largely based on her study of Rus’ history, for she held the perspective that Poles were hostile enemies and that Ukrainians were a fraternal alliance. It was at this juncture, that Ukrainians were forced to serve the interests of the Russian empire. The Russian language became mandatory in schools and publications. It also became the administrative language in the Orthodox church. The policy of Russification was extended into all facets of social life; in Left-Bank Ukraine, Kyiv, Slobidska Ukraine, and later in Right-Bank Ukraine—regained from Poland when Tsar Nicholas I successfully suppressed a Polish insurrection in 1831. After his army advanced into Warsaw in 1831, Nicholas I formed the “Western Committee”, which was assigned the task of examining the Ukrainian provinces taken from Poland and planning their integration into the Russian Empire. The annexed territories from Poland, any of which had a large population of Ukrainians, became subject to the Russification policy initiated by Catherine II. Every measure was taken to bring the new provinces into the domain of Russia. In 1840, Nicolas I abolished the legal and self-governing framework used during the times of the Lithuanian-Commonwealth and the Hetmanate, and policies were enacted to enforce Russification throughout the empire. This included the conversion of Ukrainian Uniates(Ukrainian Catholics) to Orthodoxy(Russian Orthodox), and the enforced curriculum of historical narratives that favored Russian nationalism, both in schools and universities. Nicholas I placed the responsibility of ensuring assimilation of Ukrainian people into Russian culture on the shoulders of his minister of education, Count Uvarov. Uvarov believed that the success of this undertaking would require investing hopes in future generations since young minds are more easily shaped by early education. Any curriculum geared towards a presentation of history that overlays a commonality of East Slavic Rus’ peoples would be more easily embedded into the minds of a new generation of young Slavs. This approach of targeting future generations was applied by both the Romans and Napoleon after their respective conquests of various peoples. Uvarov sought to introduce narratives that would justify Russia’s annexation and assimilation of western provinces into the empire, but this required explaining the history of northeastern Rus’ (Russia) as connected to that of southwestern Rus’ (Ukraine). Uvarov offered an award of 10,000 rubles to anyone who could

achieve this amalgamation. It would be Nikolai Ustrialov who eventually found a way to achieve this. In December of 1836, he completed the first volume of a four volume work that would later become standard curriculum throughout the empire. The book re-asserted ideas established during the reign of Catherine II. It also advocated centralized state control over political and economic affairs.

Language and culture would also become a major part of Russian policy implementation. Russian was installed as the official language to be used in schools located in the western provinces. While there were challenges in unifying Ukrainian and Russian history, the state was more concerned about Polish non assimilation since it would prove more difficult to suppress separatist notions which distinguish Polish from Russian. Russian archaeologists thus undertook excavations in places such as the Golden Gate in Kyiv to prove historical Russian influence there. Nicholas I also tried to unify Russian Orthodox with Ukrainian Greek Catholicism or Uniates. He tasked Iosif Semashko with finding a way to achieve this. A former Uniate, Semashko was impressed with the splendor of Orthodox churches and proposed that a Uniate Spiritual College be established, but separate from its Greek Catholic element. He also proposed the establishment of a Uniate Seminary, but one that would train Uniate priests in a manner aligned with Orthodoxy. As a former Uniate, Semashko proved to be the ideal person in persuading Uniates to acquiesce to the Russian Orthodox church. This became vital in serving the empire's goal of Russification. Semashko convinced Uniate priests to accommodate a number of features which were part of the Orthodox church policy. He persuaded priests to replace Uniate books with Russian ones. He also advised that the Uniate priests grow beards—the Russian Orthodox church considered the clean shave to be a form of blasphemy. In 1832, Nicholas I approved of Semashko's idea of subordinating the Uniate Church to the Orthodox Synod. On 12 February 1839, the synod adopted the Act of Union, which was drafted by Semashko and requested the incorporation of 1.5 million parishioners into the Orthodox church.

Some Ukrainians resisted Russification. Historian Mykola Kostomarov was one of such. As an assistant professor in the Department of Russian History at Kyiv University, he, in 1846, along with other intellectuals, such as poet Taras Shevchenko, formed the Cyril and Methodius brotherhood. In his books, "Books of the Genesis of the Ukrainian People" and "The Statute of the Slavic Society of Saints Cyril and Methodius: Its Main Ideas", Kostomarov articulated and promoted ideas subversive to Russification; such as Christian piety, democratic republicanism, Ukrainian national renaissance, Ukrainian messianism, and Pan-Slavic federalism. As a consequence, he came under political surveillance. In 1847, 2 days before his

wedding, he was arrested and sentenced to one year's imprisonment in the Peter and Paul Fortress in Saint Petersburg, followed by exile. Other members of the Cyril and Methodius brotherhood were also arrested and exiled. These Ukrainian nationalists and others who would follow suit would become known as "Ukrainiophiles." This led to a large crackdown on the promotion of ideas that upheld Ukrainian separatism. In a memorandum issued by officers of the "Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery", which was the Russian empire's secret police, it was stated: *"Through the minister of popular education, to warn all those dealing with Slavdom, antiquity, and nationality, as well as professors, teachers, and censors, that in their books and lectures they sedulously avoid any mention of Little Russia, Poland, and other lands subject to Russia that may be understood in a sense dangerous to the integrity and peace of the empire, and on the contrary, they strive as much as possible to incline all lessons of scholarship and history toward the true loyalty of all those tribes to Russia."* Meanwhile, the Polish were standing between the Russians and the Ukrainians. Many Polish renounced their Catholic faith and accepted Orthodoxy, but also assumed many facets of Ukrainian identity. These Polish noblemen were called "khlopomany." This group alarmed the Russian empire, which has put forth considerable effort in trying to embed the Polish into Russian society. The Polish are a west Slavic people, and like the Russians and Ukrainians, they also formed the common Slavic group that existed in the 7th century. They later migrated to central Europe before the emergence of Kievan Rus', the geographical area where Russians and Ukrainians share a common ancestry. During the Polish insurrection in 1831, many Ukrainian Uniates fought alongside the Polish against the Russian advance. It became evident to Russia that Polish accommodation of Ukrainian culture threatened the Russification movement. In 1859, key leaders of the Pan-Russian movement like Sylvestry Gogotsky began formulating doctrines that could subvert the Ukrainian movement, doctrines which were aimed at unifying all Slavs under one faith and language. In 1862, all Ukrainian Sunday schools were dismantled. The minister of internal affairs, Pyotr Valuyev, issued what was called the "Valuev Circular", which intended to restrict the use of the Ukrainian language for documents and print publications distributed amongst both narrow segments of the population and amongst the larger masses. This would include Ukrainian translation of the Gospels. The "Valuev Circular" would prove to be most effective in curtailing the spread of the Ukrainian language, culture, and identity. Nevertheless, Ukrainiophiles continued to operate in Kyiv in smaller segments. On May 18, 1876, Alexander II while on vacation in Germany, signed the Edict of Ems, which was aimed at stopping the activities of the Ukrainophiles, which the empire felt was a danger to the state. A

number of prohibitions were established. They included bans on the importation of all Ukrainian-language publications into the empire, bans on the publication of religious text, grammar, and books in Ukrainian for both the common people and the upper classes, bans on existing Ukrainian-language publications from school libraries, and bans on the use of Ukrainian language in theatrical performances, songs and poetry readings. Alexander II also ordered strong reprisals against Ukrainophile activists like Mykhailo Drahomanov and Pavlo Chubynsky, both of whom were exiled from Ukraine. Teaching positions in Ukraine became entirely filled with Russian teachers, while the Ukrainian teachers were reassigned to Russia. The Edict of Ems also approved subsidizing a newspaper called “Slovo”, which was published in Galacia, a country within the Austrian monarchy. Galacia was a very diverse country consisting of Poles, Ruthenians (East Slavs), Ukrainians, Rusyns, Jews, Germans, Armenians, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Roma and others. But the newspaper “Slovo” was heavily inclined against Ukrainophiles, and for this reason, Alexander II, personally approved of the subsidy which amounted to 2000 gulden. After Austria’s Seven Weeks war with Prussia, Austria became a dual monarchy known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and later the appointment of a Polish governor in Galacia would be met with hostility by the East Slavic Ruthenians. (“Ruthenian” was how Rus’ people identified themselves in Polish territories.) In response to Austria’s accommodation of Polonism, the “Slovo” began promoting Russophilia, which led to many Russophile priests immigrating to the Russian empire. As adherents of Russification policy, these Orthodox converts from Greek Catholicism, would settle amongst the remaining Uniates and force them to convert to Orthodoxy. When Nicholas II became Tsar in 1894, the Russian Empire had become plagued with corruption and oppression. At the same time, Russia was seeking to establish a shipping port on the Pacific Ocean for its maritime and navy trade. Leery of the Russian empire’s imperialism, the Japanese feared that Russian encroachment would interfere with their interests in Korea and Manchuria. Japan was looking to expand into mainland Asia. So Japan offered to recognize Russian influence in Manchuria in exchange for Russia recognizing Japanese influence in Korea. The Russian empire refused, insisting on establishing a buffer zone between Russia and Japan in Korea. When negotiations failed, Japan attacked a Russian navy fleet at Port Author, China in 1904, and would weaken the Russian forces considerably. Refusing to surrender, Nicholas II called a conference at St. Petersburg in 1905 in order to generate more support for the war. However, many socialist groups that attended the conference considered Russia’s imminent defeat at the hands of the Japanese as indicative of a need for reforms. When these demands were ignored at the conference, the

socialists and workers groups marched to the Tsar's palace at St. Petersburg. There, things would take a violent turn, as the Russian forces opened fire on the demonstrators, killing hundreds and as a result, strikes and demonstrations broke out across the country. In an attempt to stabilize the country, Nicholas II decided to ease up on Russification policies, granting people the freedom to choose their religion. Subsequently, 150,000 Ukrainians converted back to Greek Catholicism, leading many of the Orthodox clergy, who devoted their lives to converting Uniates to Orthodoxy, feeling betrayed. In response to demands for reforms amid the wave of violence, Nicholas II declared the formation of the Duma, which was to serve as the lower house of a new legislative body. Elections for the Duma took place in 1906, and Ukrainians were able to elect their own representatives capable of promoting Ukrainian autonomy. A Ukrainian Caucus existed in the 1st and 2nd dumas in 1906 and 1907. The last 2 dumas, however, had a different electoral system established by the law in 1907, which limited the representation of peasants and minorities in the dumas. On account of that, the Ukrainian voice became less influential. Nicholas II had issued the Russian constitution of 1906 called "fundamental laws", giving himself autocratic power and the ability to dissolve the Duma at will. When Russian nationalists warned him about the separatism that could ensue amongst other groups such as the Belarusians, Nicholas II ended the 1st and 2nd dumas. The following 3rd and 4th dumas would heavily favor landowners.

Russian nationalists formed the Union of the Russian People in 1905. Their goal was to re-assert Russian nationalism and support for the monarchy throughout the empire. Naturally, this was wellreceived by Nicholas II. Their base of operations was in West-bank Ukraine, and the union upheld the idea that East Slavs comprised one race, and that there was no difference between Great Russians, White Russians and Little Russians. They were able to garner the support of Ukrainian peasantry by scapegoating Jewish and Polish landowners and middlemen. As a result, many Ukrainian peasants sacrificed their identity, believing the Union would serve their economic interests. A number of brochures were produced, which spoke out against the idea that the Ukrainian language was a separate language. On the other hand, those who participated in the Ukrainian nationalist movement were tagged as "Mazepists." The Union also pointed out the dangers of the Ukrainian movement to the Russian state. It noted the futility of Ukrainian nationalism and its inability to appeal to the peasantry, due to the fact that it was mostly cultivated among students and intellectuals.

On June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated by Bosnian Serbs in Sarajevo, the provincial capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The

motive for the assassination was Austria's annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina, the mostly Slavic province. This move by Austria upset the balance of power in the Balkans and stifled the ambition of PanSlavic nationalists. Serbia was perhaps most angered by the annexation. After the assassination, Austria demanded that they be allowed to conduct an internal investigation in Serbia. After consulting with Russia, an ally of Serbia, Serbia refused the demand. Three days later, Austro-Hungary declared war on Serbia. In response, Russia declared war on Austria. These course of events triggered the start of World War I, then known as the Great War.

Chapter 5: The Rise of the Bolsheviks

On August 18, 1914, Russia advanced into Austria. Consequently, Russian nationalists saw this as an opportunity to put a final end to Ukrainian nationalism by crushing Ukrainophile elements in the Austro-Hungarian empire, and incorporating them into the Russian empire. On August 19th, the Russian army captured eastern Galacia from Austria. Greek Catholic(Uniates) Ukrainians made up 65% of the population there. Poles made up 22%. Russia immediately enforced policies aimed at integrating Galacia into the Russian empire, forcing Ukrainian Greek Catholics to assimilate into Russian culture by converting to Orthodoxy. This Russification of Eastern Galacia may have also been largely provoked by Austria's persecution of Russophiles, just prior to Russia's invasion. Russophiles believe that Ukrainians are ethnically no different than Russians. Furthermore, some Russians disagreed with Russia's decision to annex eastern Galacia, fearing the consequences of enjoining a mostly Ukrainophile country with the Russian empire, as they believed that Ukrainian separatists in Galacia could incite Ukrainian separatism throughout the empire. Nonetheless, Russia moved forward with its agenda in Galacia. The names of streets and public squares were denominated into themes that represented Russian culture and politics. The Ukrainian language was phased out of schools. Books written in the Ukrainian language were prohibited. Ukrainophile organizations were closed. The head of the Ukrainian-Greek Catholic Church was arrested and exiled to an Orthodox monastery. In contrast, Russophile leaders and organizations in Galacia were supported, while Russophile activists who were jailed by the Austrian empire were subsequently released. Meanwhile, Ukrainian nationalists in the Russian empire stood by unable to intervene, as they were under scrutiny as possible defectors and supporters of the Austrian regime. Russian nationalists warned that Ukrainian nationalists could undermine Russia's efforts in the war, since many of the Ukrainophiles in Galacia did in fact support the Austrian empire. As a result, many Russophiles believed that Ukrainophiles in the Russian empire could share in those sentiments. This would put the onus on Ukrainian nationalists in Russia to prove themselves loyal to the tsar. Russia's early success against Austro-Hungary would be short-lived. When German Army intervened, the Russian Army was steadily pushed back. The subsequent loss of morale combined with poor planning upended the Russian empire. During the Russian setbacks in World War I, Russians at home were complaining of food shortages and low wages and demanding an end to the war. Anti-war and anticapitalist demonstrations began taking place throughout the empire. A revolution ensued in February of 1917, leading to Nicholas II abdicating his throne. This was followed by widespread rioting in

Petrograd and other Russian cities. A provisional government was installed with the conditional support of the Mensheviks, a faction of the Russian socialist movement. The other two were the Bolsheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries. The Mensheviks wanted the provisional government to pursue a plan for peace without annexation. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian People's Republic declared their independence and claimed all the traditionally Ukrainian settled territories. This was followed by a surge of rallies all throughout Ukraine.

The provisional government re-asserted its intentions to continue the war effort with France and Britain, but after more setbacks in finding ways to end the war, the provisional government would be ousted by the Bolsheviks in October of 1917, led by Vladimir Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. Lenin was previously exiled by the Russian Tsarist government for his Marxist revolutionary activities in the late 1800s. He was arrested, charged with sedition and exiled to Siberia. He later moved to Western Europe to continue his theoretical development of Marxism. After a failed revolution against the Russian Empire in 1905 by proletariat revolutionaries, Lenin would thereafter call for World War I to be transformed into a worldwide revolution against capitalism. Because Lenin was an anti-war activist, Germany became instrumental in facilitating his return to Russia in the hopes that he would stifle Russia's war efforts against Germany. Lenin returned to successfully lead the October revolution against the Russian Tsarist empire. From there, Russia would eventually go under Soviet control. Ukraine, however, refused to cooperate with the new Bolshevik government in Petrograd. Prior to the October Revolution of 1917, when the provisional government was installed in Russia earlier that year in February and March, the Central Rada was formed in Ukraine, which united deputies, workers, and peasants, as well as members of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Initially, they supported the provisional government. They even wired congratulations its new head, Georgii Lvov. Aleksandr Kerensky, the minister of justice was also congratulated by the Rada. But shortly afterwards in June, the Central Rada claimed autonomy. As Ukraine became influenced by internal conflict between the rising Bolshevik movements and Ukrainian nationalism, the Central Rada would later renounce autonomy. However, as the allegiance of the peasant class drifted away from the Ukrainian nationalists towards communism, the Central Rada would become hostile towards the Bolsheviks. After the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia, the Central Rada used the opportunity to seize power in Kiev, proclaiming the Ukrainian National Republic, designating its territory and confirming its federal relationship with Russia. Regardless of this proclamation, the rise of Bolshevism in Ukraine gave Russia the leverage to make demands upon them. Ukraine's refusal to cooperate led to a Bolshevik invasion

of the country. Before the October Revolution of 1917, Lenin intended to recognize Ukrainian independence, but changed his stance afterwards. Lenin's initial stance on Ukrainian independence was mainly for the sake of facilitating the overthrow of the provisional government. After this was achieved, Lenin withdrew support for the Central Rada, believing it did not share the anti-capitalist outlook of his Bolshevik movement. Inevitably, the Bolsheviks would look to seize power in Ukrainian territories. Lenin sent Russian troops to Kyiv, the capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic. This unit was led by Mikhail Muraviev, who seized the capital in January of 1918, arresting and executing anyone on the streets caught speaking Ukrainian. In fact, anyone suspected of being an enemy of the Bolshevik revolution was killed. The Bolsheviks established a rival government in Kiev, the People's Secretariat. The Central Rada, however, sent a peace delegation to Brest to negotiate with the central powers. Essentially, the Central Rada was secretly seeking out Austro-German protection from the Bolsheviks. Hence why the Central Rada would subsequently claim its independence from Russia. Following this declaration, the Central Rada pushed forward passing a series of laws aimed at economic, labor, and land reforms. After signing the Peace Treaty of BrestLitovsk with Germany, ending Russia's involvement in World War 1, Russia was left having to recognize the Central Rada and remove its troops from Kiev. The German Army then took over Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia as accorded by the treaty, and the Central Rada would ultimately become a puppet government. But when the Central Rada failed to deliver on its promises, such as providing grain shipments to Germany, the German command dissolved the Central Rada and in-stalled another puppet government led by Hetman Skoropadsky. He formally declared the overthrow of the Central Rada, suspended the Ukraine People's Republic(UNR), and outlawed the Communist Party in Ukraine. The Socialist Directorate of Ukraine, however, would eventually overthrow the Cossack Hetmanate and then re-establish the UNR in November of 1918. This placed Kiev back under the control of the Bolsheviks.

In August of 1919, the White Army, led by General Anton Denikin, and made up of Russian nationalists who hated both the Bolshevik and Ukrainian movements, seized Kyiv from the Bolsheviks. They then enforced a widespread Russification policy, making Russian the language of both state institutions and schools. By early 1920, Ukrainian National Republic fighters would drive Denikin's forces from Ukraine. As the Ukrainian army became locked in a guerrilla war against the Bolsheviks in the ongoing Soviet-Ukrainian War in 1920, the Ukrainians made a plea to the west, complaining of the restrictions placed on their civil liberties and cultural rights. Julian Batchinsky wrote a memorandum to the United States in 1920,

requesting that the US recognize the Ukrainian People's Republic:

Washington, D.C. May 12, 1920.

The Honorable, The Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington. Sir: In view of the present status in eastern Europe, and in deference to the unsettled affairs of the territory of the former Russian empire, which are now pressing for a definite solution, I, as the representative of the Government of the Ukrainian People's Republic, conceive it to be my duty to submit for your consideration this memorandum setting forth the just claims of the Ukrainian people to political and economic independence. As a consequence of the facts herein explained, I respectfully ask the Government of the United States of America to extend recognition to the Ukrainian People's Republic as a free state. The national aspirations of Ukraine embrace political liberation for all Ukrainians, consolidation of all free Ukrainians into one state, the erection of a constitutional democratic republic, and economic co-operation with neighboring and other states. Ukraine's claim to independence is based upon the following principal grounds: (1) The existence of the Ukrainians as a well-defined, separate, groupconscious race, with a continuous historic and cultural tradition; (2) Their occupation, over a period of centuries, of the lands where they now dwell; (3) Their age-long efforts, increasingly of popular origin, to achieve and maintain political independence; (4) The obvious interest and desire of the entire Ukrainian population to organize and sustain its economic life free of exploitation by neighbors and foreign powers; and (5) The crying need for a new order in eastern Europe, and the permanent elimination of the historic struggle between Poland and Russia to control the natural resources of Ukraine.

By all the canons of ethnology and history, the Ukrainians form a distinct racial unit. In America there has been a popular impression that Ukraine is merely a province of Russia, identified with it linguistically and racially. This is a misapprehension. The leading anthropologists, even among the Russians, agree that the Ukrainians constitute a physical type clearly different from the Great Russians, the White Ruthenians or the Poles. In culture and temperament they display peculiarities which permeate their whole social and moral nature. Their language is a separate Slavic tongue, and not merely a dialect of the Great Russian. "Between Ukrainians and Russians," says Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, a learned student of Russia, "there are profound differences of language, customs, traditions, domestic arrangements, mode of life and communal organizations. Indeed, if I did not fear to ruffle unnecessarily the patriotic susceptibilities of my Great Russian

friends who have a pet theory, I should say that we have here two distinct nationalities...." "The historic development," says the official statement of the Russian Imperial Academy of Sciences, "contributed toward the creation of two nationalities: the Great Russian and the Ukrainian. The historic life of the two peoples failed to develop a common language for them. On the contrary, it really strengthened those dialectic variances with which the ancestors of the Ukrainians, on the one hand, and those of the Great Russians, on the other, made their appearance in history. And, of course, the living Great Russian idiom, as it is spoken by the people of Moscow, Riazan, Archangel, Yaroslavl or Novgorod cannot be called a 'Pan-Russian' language as opposed to the Ukrainian of Poltava, Kiev or Lviv (Lemberg)." The Ukrainian race is as nearly autochthonous as any in central or eastern Europe. A brief survey of history shows that, for more than one thousand years, the Ukrainians and their forbears have continued to occupy approximately the same lands which they now inhabit, except for temporary recessions and recolonizations caused by Mongol invasions. In the ninth century they were already settled in the vast and fertile plains and woodlands lying between the Carpathian Mountains and the Sea of Azov, and embracing the valleys of the Dniester, Pruth, Boh, Dnieper and Donetz. Organized government in Ukraine began with the ancient state of Kiev. The ascendancy of Kiev also marks the period of Ukraine's greatest political expansion. From the ninth to the thirteenth century, Kiev was the center of the economic, intellectual and political life of eastern Europe, uniting the entire ethnographic Ukrainian territories. The name by which this state was known was "Russ," taken from the name of the reigning dynasty. This term was later appropriated by the Great Russians. "Because of the Byzantine commerce, learning and craft," observes the Polish historian Zakrzewski, "Kiev, the 'mother of Russ cities,' was for the Poland of the eleventh and twelfth centuries what Rome had been for earlier Germans." The French geographer Reclus notices that academies flourished at Kiev and Ostrog before the Great Russians owned a single high school, and draws attention to the fact that Russia, during the regenerative period of Peter the Great, received her teachers from Ukraine. The fall of Kiev and Ukraine's subsequent loss of autonomous statehood in the fourteenth century can only be ascribed to the old system of military conquest. The affairs of eastern Ukraine became confused and decadent through the constant Mongol pressure which began in the thirteenth century. One hundred years later, part of western Ukraine also, weakened by frequent Tatar invasions, fell a prey to Poland, to whom she was a tempting prize because of her rich soil. The Polish conquest of Ukraine started in 1340 and, after thirty-five years of the bitterest warfare, the Poles succeeded in annexing an area of land

approximately coextensive with the present provinces of Kholm and Eastern Galicia. This they never succeeded in assimilating, in spite of the most tremendous efforts. Simultaneously Volhynia and other northern Ukrainian territories became confederated with Lithuania in order to gain protection against the Tatars. The marriage of the Lithuanian king to the Queen of Poland and the union of the two realms drew these Ukrainian lands also in 1386 into an informal union with the Polish empire which, in 1569, in spite of Ukrainian protests, was made definite, and lasted until 1648. In that year the whole Ukrainian people rose, under the leadership of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, and put an end to this union, which was incompatible with their interests and with their type of civilization. Then, anticipating further Polish efforts to destroy the newly won independence of Ukraine, and menaced by other foes, particularly the Turks, then the strongest military power in eastern Europe, the Ukrainians concluded an agreement of confederation with the Czar of Muscovy in 1654. It is interesting to recall that Khmelnytsky was expressly advised against this step by Oliver Cromwell, who declared that the Czar would never permanently recognize a free people. The most important clauses in the treaty of 1654 guaranteed a freely chosen supreme head for the Ukrainian state, called a "hetman"; the right to engage in diplomatic relations with other states, except Poland and Turkey, when the cognizance of the Czar was necessary; free trade with all foreign nations; the complete independence of the judicial system; the right to choose a leader for the army, over whom the "hetman" had supreme control; and, lastly, the independence of the Ukrainian Church. Muscovy did not live up to these terms, and the result was a succession of Ukrainian uprisings, directed now against Russia just as they had formerly been aimed at Poland. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, Russia and Poland made common cause and partitioned Ukraine, making the Dnieper the frontier between their two empires. The most important rebellion against this last measure was that led by Mazeppa in 1709, which was quelled by Peter the Great. After the time of Mazeppa, Russia's policy of repression was pursued openly and ruthlessly. Peter instituted a supervision over the autonomous Ukrainian administration, vesting authority in Muscovite officers, through whose hands passed everything pertaining to the hetman's chancellery. In 1722 the power of the hetmans was cut down to nothing. In 1764 Catherine II. abolished the office altogether. Meanwhile, in order to assure possession of Ukraine, the Russian government was making every effort to assimilate the Ukrainian people. One step toward accomplishing this was the suppression of Ukrainian literature. In 1720 a special censorship over the publication of Ukrainian books was established in Kiev. In 1769 even the printing of Ukrainian primers was forbidden, and Russian

textbooks were introduced in spite of the protests of Ukrainian educators. Step by step, national feeling was stifled in Ukraine. In 1775, the "Zaporogian Sitch," the last bulwark of Ukraine's autonomy, and the basis of the Ukrainian Army, was destroyed. In 1783 the peasants of Ukraine, free since 1648, when they had thrown off Polish domination, were again subjected by the Russian government to serfdom in its most cruel form. Hundreds of thousands of free peasants and Cossacks, together with millions of acres of Ukrainian land, were distributed among the favorites of Catherine II. This measure had the effect of crushing the resistance to Russification among the Ukrainian nobility, and estranged them from the common people. The serfdom of the small farmer was so profitable for the gentry that the preponderance of the aristocracy became superficially Russian. Under pressure of Russian schooling, administration and military service, they adopted the Russian language and political ideas. To achieve this desirable result, the Muscovite government did not hesitate to persecute ruthlessly anything that could be held as a reminder of the republican régime in Ukraine. At the same time, an analogous Polonization of the upper classes was being carried out in western Ukraine. The last quarter of the century witnessed a temporary eclipse of the Ukrainian spirit of nationalism. The French Revolution released forces that had been imprisoned in the hearts and minds of the people. A wave of nationalistic feeling swept through Europe, bringing inspiration to the Slavs as well as to their western brothers. Every branch of the Slavic race awoke to a realization of its history, its traditions and its great men. The Ukrainians shared in this renaissance. Between the revived nationalism and the spirit of democracy a natural alliance presently sprang up. Especially in the Dnieper district, there began an enthusiastic study of the country's history, and a perusal of old documents and popular traditions. The keenest interest was manifested in everything pertaining to ethnography, philology and popular culture. It was the tardy recognition of the people as guardians of national culture which did much to break down the lack of sympathy which had so long prevailed between the nobles and the lower classes. But the Ukrainian movement was confronted by a bitterly hostile Russophile bureaucracy. It is remarkable that Russo-Ukrainian policies should have remained so static from the time of Peter the Great onward, while a number of changes were taking place in Russo-Polish relations. Yet such was the case. The Ukrainian language was restricted time and again. Ukrainian economic life was hampered in several ways. The Ukrainian serfs, upon their liberation in 1861, had been granted smaller allotments than the Russian serfs. This resulted in overpopulation of the agricultural districts, emigration and a high death rate. The lack of schools made

remote the possibility of improving farming methods. Ukrainian industry suffered a set-back through the unfavorable tariff policies adhered to by the Russian government and by the fact that no banks, except those with central offices in Moscow or Petrograd, were allowed to establish branches in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the nineteenth century witnessed a notable growth of Ukrainian national feeling. The early years of the century constitute the period of literary rebirth. Then followed the educational work among the common people. Private schools were organized, and pamphlets and books were distributed. Cultural organizations were formed, and a pronounced interest in science was displayed. This entire revival so alarmed the Russian government that, in 1878, the Czar prohibited by ukase almost all publications in the Ukrainian language. Still, the literary impulse was not suppressed. It transferred itself to Eastern Galicia and Switzerland and, in spite of grave obstacles, succeeded in winning for the Ukrainian a worthy place among Slavonic literatures. Side by side with the cultural advance, a political reawakening of the Ukrainian people was taking place. It was appreciated by the Ukrainians that political liberty for their land and race was expressly conditioned upon the overthrow of the Czarist government. Accordingly they bent their efforts in that direction. Ukrainians organized and took a leading part in the Decembrist uprising of 1825. In the subsequent revolutionary movement they were again prominent, and two-thirds of the leaders were natives of Ukraine. The events of March, 1917, were largely made possible by the Ukrainian regiments stationed in Petrograd, who refused any further allegiance to the Romanovs and became supporters of the newly created authorities. Later on, the Ukrainians were the first of the subject nations of the Russian empire to organize their own government. On November 20, 1917, Ukraine was proclaimed an independent nation by the Central Rada, the provisional Ukrainian parliament. The struggle to win recognition for this independence is still in progress. The expediency of Ukraine's claim to exist as a self-governing nation does not, however, rest merely upon racial, ethnological and historical bases. There are primary economic considerations which press for its admittance to the circle of free nations. The Ukrainian people inhabit a land 330,000 square miles in extent, with a population of 45,000,000. This territory is not merely abundantly self-supporting, but is, in fact, one of the richest areas on the earth's surface. Four-fifths of the entire extent lie within a belt of deep, black earth, which produces bounteous crops of wheat, barley, rye, oats, sugar-beets, fruit, tobacco and vegetables. Under the Ukrainian ethnographic territory lie mineral riches: coal, petroleum, iron, manganese, salt, phosphate, kaolin, graphite and many other substances of commercial value. In the normal pre-war period, Ukraine used to

supply about 5,000,000 tons of grain for export annually. Most of this was wheat. The last three years, particularly 1919, have seen good harvests in Ukraine. At the present moment, when western Europe is unable to feed herself, Ukraine has an excess remaining from the crops of 1917, 1918 and 1919, to an amount of not less than 10,000,000 tons of different kinds of grain. Besides this, the country can guarantee a minimum yearly export of 300,000 to 600,000 tons of sugar; 9,000 tons of tobacco; 17,000 tons of sugar-beet seeds; and 10,000 tons of flax and hemp yarn. Besides these products, Ukraine used to export annually before the war: 65,000 tons of eggs; 6,500 tons of raw hides; 12,000 tons of pork and dressed poultry; 9,000 tons of beef; 240,000 head of beef cattle; 15,000 head of horses; 130,000 hogs; and large quantities of wool, feathers and hops. In minerals, Ukraine may export in a short time as much as 100,000 tons of manganese ore annually; 500,000 tons of iron ore; and considerable amounts of phosphates, salt and soda. With reorganization of transportation facilities, she can furnish from 6,000,000 to 10,000,000 tons of coal and coke, as well as benzol toluol, anthracen phenol, naphthalin and other valuable coal tar derivatives; about 90,000 tons of coal tar; sulphuric acid, ammonium salts and many other raw and semi-manufactured products. The preceding enumeration of the physical resources of Ukraine shows how mistaken is the conception that Ukraine could not maintain an economic existence independent of Russia. If a country possessing such extraordinary natural advantages and wealth as Ukraine cannot stand alone, how can one justify the independence of Italy, Greece, Poland, Jugoslavia, Finland and other European nations whose right to autonomy is not questioned, but whose natural endowments are far less favorable to economic freedom. The converse of the same proposition; viz., that Russia cannot live without Ukraine, will not survive impartial criticism. Although it is quite clear that, in reasoning to this end, other interests than those of Ukraine supervene, it is nevertheless worth while to examine this point of view in order to expose its falsity. The three fundamental bases of opposition usually advanced are: (1) Ukraine is the granary of Russia and is necessary to Russia for a large part of her food supply; (2) Ukraine separates Russia from the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, thereby closing the outlet to the Mediterranean; (3) Ukraine possesses a supply of coal and iron which is necessary to Russia.

The first objection is refuted by an examination of statistics. Figures for the years previous to the war show consistently that Ukraine's exportations of cereals to other parts of the Russian empire did not reach more than 10 to 15% of her total export; i.e., about 36,000,000 bushels annually. Nearly all of this was destined for Poland,

Lithuania and White Ruthenia. Russia proper never consumed more than a very small fraction of Ukraine's grain. She did not need it then and will not need it in the future. She is virtually self-sustaining in cereals, and the small surplus needed can readily be obtained from the fields of Siberia and the region of the Volga. The second allegation, that Russia needs the Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, is readily disposed of by a reference to Russian maritime experience. The official Russian statistics of the traffic of merchandise by rail show no southern port which served as an outlet for the products of the territories situated north of the ethnic frontier of Ukraine, with the single exception of Rostov-on-the-Don. Novorossyysk was the port used by the Ukrainian Cossacks of Kuban and the northern Caucasus. Up to the present time, Russia proper has depended almost exclusively upon the Baltic ports. By special treaties with the new Baltic states, Russia is assuring herself a continued use of their ports. There is no reason why, if it should appear necessary and advisable, a similar conciliatory agreement with Ukraine could not arrange for a common use of the Black Sea ports. With regard to Ukraine's coal resources, it is true that the Donetz basin furnished 70% of the total coal output of the former Russian empire, and the Donetz basin is mostly within the ethnographic limits of Ukraine. But it is also a fact that four-fifths of this coal was consumed in Ukraine itself, and that northwestern Russia and the Baltic provinces never used the coal from the Donetz basin, because it could not compete in price with English or German coal. Furthermore, northern and central Russia are well supplied with wood and peat, and with coal from the vicinity of Moscow. Ukraine has very little wood or peat, and the exhaustion of the Donetz basin for the sake of Russian industries would leave her without fuel resources. The Urals and Siberia, too, are supplied with local coal, while in the Kuznetsky district in west Siberia are vast deposits, scarcely worked as yet because of the lack of railway lines into Siberia. The iron fields of the Urals and of other provinces of Russia proper have not been extensively exploited, and before the war Ukraine did indeed furnish three-fourths of all the iron supply of the former Russian empire. But the beds of iron ore in Ukraine are not very large, and it would be erroneous to assume that they could adequately supply the needs of all Russia for any long period of time. In any case, it is safe to conclude that, if the metallurgical development of Russia is continued and her mines consistently worked, she will be entirely able to get along without iron imports from Ukraine. Finally, there is no obstacle to permanent economic co-operation of Ukraine and Russia, and brisk commercial dealings between the two independent states. But political disentanglement is a first requisite. The richness of Ukraine has always made it a tempting region for exploitation by neighboring states. This is more

than ever true today. If such exploitation is not to be carried on at the expense of and to the detriment of the Ukrainian people, a separate state organization is necessary to assume protection over their economic interests. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that a free Ukraine does not imply an economically isolated Ukraine. Constant traffic with friendly foreign powers is desired by all the Ukrainian political parties. Ukraine lacks machinery, capital and trained experts. The railroad question is of enormous importance. Before the Revolution, all of the rail lines of Ukraine yielded considerable profits, especially those known as the Southwestern Railroads. But Russia did not see fit to use this income in the construction of further roads and, as a result, Ukraine possesses a very inconsiderable network of railroads: only about 11,115 miles. This is much less than the country needs. The war almost completely wrecked and demoralized even this inadequate transportation system. The railroads must be rebuilt, and the insufficiently developed public highways must be improved and extended. The regulation of navigable rivers is another matter of great importance, and the vast available power possibilities of the rapids of the Dnieper and other streams must be exploited. Central power stations must be erected, new methods introduced in mining, grain elevators built and agriculture, milling, sugar refining and other industries given an upward impetus by the application of scientific management and fresh capital. Inability to contest the force of the foregoing historic and economic considerations has led certain foes of Ukrainian independence to make the assertion that the Ukrainian national movement is artificially stimulated and does not receive support from the masses of the population. This contention is controverted by the most obvious facts. For more than two years the Ukrainians have been actively fighting for their liberty, in spite of almost incredible obstacles. They have had no support from any foreign source in this struggle; they were attacked at one and the same time by the Bolsheviks and anti-Bolsheviks: they were blockaded; they were unable to secure ammunition or sanitary supplies. They did not give up, because they realized that the question was one of life or death. No other nation in modern times has fought for its independence under such difficult circumstances, and none has expressed its desire for freedom more strongly. The plebiscite of blood is the most sincere evidence of the will to self-determination. However, prolonged and stubborn fighting has not been the only way in which the Ukrainian people have shown their desire to be free. They have had several opportunities to manifest their wish in a more peaceful and regular manner. Thus, the Central Rada, which represented all classes of Ukrainians, and included in addition representatives of the various non-Ukrainian nationalities in the land, proclaimed Ukraine's independence in 1917. When, in

December of the same year, the Bolshevik propagandists questioned the representative character of the Central Rada, a general congress of the workers and peasants of Ukraine was called, and this congress, chosen after the Bolshevik method, made haste to affirm its support of the Central Rada by a vote of 2,000 to 70. There was also in 1917 a formal election of deputies to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. Ukraine elected 230 deputies in all. Of those, 75% or 175 members, were Ukrainian nationalists. After the overthrow of the pro-German Hetman Skoropadsky in 1918, and assumption of authority by the Directorate, even the Ukrainian communists declared themselves in favor of a free Ukraine and protested to the Russian Soviet Government against its proposed invasion. Their protest went unheeded, and when the Russian Bolsheviks occupied Kiev and endeavored to impose their system upon Ukraine, they found no Ukrainians who were willing to cooperate with them. The result was a so-called "Ukrainian Soviet Government," which is in reality anything but Ukrainian. The head is a Roumanian, Rakovsky, and the régime is nothing but a local agency of the Moscow government. It is noteworthy that the Government of the Ukrainian People's Republic, headed by General Petlura, which I have the honor to represent, is the only government which the Ukrainian people have been willing to support. On the other hand, they have revolted against all foreign invaders who have attempted to impose their own rule upon the Ukrainians. The Germans, the Bolsheviks and the forces of General Denikin all met with vigorous resistance. If now the Polish forces are in Ukraine and the population does not oppose them, it is because the Poles are acting in conjunction with the Ukrainian forces under Petlura, as their allies. It is also necessary to consider the opinion entertained in some circles that an independent Ukraine must inevitably fall under the influence of Germany and become a German outpost in eastern Europe. The reason generally advanced as a basis for this suspicion is that Ukraine concluded a separate peace with Germany in February, 1918, at Brest Litovsk. In this connection, it should be remembered that Roumania, too, concluded a separate peace with Germany. Yet Roumania has continued to be considered an ally of Germany's opponents, and it is everywhere recognized that she only negotiated with Germany because of the bitter fact that she was forced to do so. Ukraine was in far worse condition than Roumania when she concluded her peace with Germany. Roumania had at least an organized state and a loyal army. Ukraine's government was in its infancy, its state organization was slight, and its army consisted chiefly of the remnants of the demoralized Russian forces. The Ukrainian leaders were faced by several wars; on the one hand by the war with Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria; and now on the other, by the new conflict with the Russian Soviet

Government. Under the circumstances, Ukraine had to choose between submitting entirely to the Bolsheviks, in which case the country would be over-run by Germans anyway, or making any kind of outright peace with Germany and then hoping for the best. Subsequent events proved that Germany never had any interest in a permanently independent Ukraine. Toward the end of the war, she was in desperate need of foodstuffs. Today she wants, not merely foods, but also a new and fruitful field for banking, commercial exploitation and the sale of German goods. Germany has grown to consider eastern Europe as a natural market for her products. What she wants is a Greater Russia, whether it be Czarist, Bolshevik or Constitutional. Under the circumstances, it is more plausible to suspect the Germans of plotting to re-establish "Russia, one and indivisible," than to regard them as friendly to a free Ukraine. At the present moment, the recognition of the Ukrainian People's Republic is a matter of international expediency, because there can be no peace in eastern Europe as long as Ukraine is subjected to any neighboring nation. Proposals to deal with the Ukrainian people as if they had no moral right to self-determination are an obvious contradiction to the principles enunciated by President Wilson at the time of America's entrance into the war against Germany and her allies. The attempt to carry them into effect can only result in continued unrest in eastern Europe. The relegation of all Ukraine to Russia would mean at best the arbitrary compulsion of the Ukrainians to a federation which, if advisable, should come at their own instance and of their own free will; not because of outside pressure. At worst, it would renew their servitude. The partition of the country between Poland and Russia will not only produce continued restlessness and discontent within Ukraine itself, but will also continuously tempt Poland and Russia to make war on one another, in order to extend their respective spheres of influence. An independent Ukrainian state, on the contrary, would establish a balance of power in eastern Europe, which must be regarded as the surest guarantee of peace in that portion of the world. The foregoing statement covers, in outline form, the main grounds upon which Ukraine bases her claim to independence. This memorandum is presented to you, Mr. Secretary, in the hope that the Ukrainian situation will be thoroughly examined, and it is my earnest belief that a careful study of Ukrainian affairs will sustain the request for recognition of the Ukrainian People's Republic which I have the honor herewith to submit. I am, my dear Sir, Your very obedient servant, Julian Batchinsky, Diplomatic Representative of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

By 1921, the Soviet Red Army would reclaim most of Ukraine. On December 30, 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

was officially established in Moscow. Lenin was elected honorary chairman of the congress since he was not present, having suffered a stroke days prior as a result of lead poisoning from a gunshot wound as a result of an assassination attempt. Lenin's initial desire to acknowledge Ukrainian independence was also challenged by the fact that only very few members in the Bolshevik party could speak Ukrainian. The Bolshevik party was comprised mostly of Russians and Jews. Despite that being the case, Lenin felt it was more feasible to make concessions on language and culture, without resorting to allowing Ukrainians to form an independent state. Religion, however, was off limits since a major precept of Bolshevism was militant atheism, which was mandated throughout the Soviet Union. Both Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches were closed.

Stalin, who was slated to be Lenin's successor, wanted Ukraine to be an independent autonomous republic in the Russian federation, but subject to Moscow. Stalin considered Lenin as too soft on nationalists, while Lenin considered Stalin too harsh. A year after Stalin was appointed General Secretary in 1922, he moved to crush Ukrainian and Georgian opposition, first with political methods, and later with violence. After the head of the Ukrainian government advocated for "a handing over" of some of the central government's power to the republics, a gesture which Stalin considered absurd, Stalin proceeded to remove him from power and sent him into exile. Lenin's proposal to make concessions for the Ukrainian language encountered obstacles in the early 1920s. Party membership in Ukraine was 45% Russian, 33% Ukrainian, and 14% Jewish. A good portion of the proletariat in Ukraine was Russian or Russian speaking. Dmitri Lebed, the second secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee, asserted that Russian culture and language was already embedded into much of the working class in the cities of Ukraine, while Ukrainian language and culture was more relegated to the country side. This notion spread amongst Ukrainian Party leaders. This lack of progress in linguistically Ukrainizing the cities disturbed Oleksandr Shumsky, Ukraine's Commissar of Education. He requested that Stalin replace the head of the Ukrainian party with someone who was ethnically Ukrainian. However, his pleas to Stalin would be met with disdain. Stalin wrote a letter in 1926 to the policymaking committee in Ukraine, criticizing the attempts at Ukrainization of the working class, stating that Ukrainization attempts would give off the impression of Ukrainian separatism and also an impression of hostility to Russian culture, Lenin, and the Soviet Union. Stalin eventually replaced Shumsky with Bolshevik Mykola Skrypnyk. After Stalin consolidated power, his position on Ukrainization of Ukraine became increasingly pessimistic. Stalin's secret police stated that Ukrainians were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the regime and thus seeking out fellowship with

Ukrainian nationalists, Whites, and Poles. This report led to a decisive change in the “Nationality” policy of the Soviet Union. By 1929, *Korenizatsiya*, which was the policy of the Soviet Union to integrate non-Russian nationalities into the governments of their respective soviet republics, would no longer be enforced. Leading figures of the *Korenizatsiya* were removed and purges of national republics ensued. 474 alleged Ukrainian nationalists were arrested and tried. The communists accused Ukrainian academics of plotting an uprising with both Ukrainian nationalists and Jozef Pilsudski, an old enemy of the Bolsheviks, who in 1926 rose to power in Poland. Many were convicted and sent to the gulag, Stalin’s brutal system of forced labor camps, where many died from either disease, starvation, or execution. Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who was the founder of the Central Rada, was also arrested and exiled in 1931, and would later die under mysterious circumstances in Russia in 1934. Stalin believed that Ukrainization efforts in Ukraine had been hijacked by extremists and violent separatists seeking to incite the Ukrainian peasantry against the USSR, and much of this coincided with Stalin’s collectivization efforts to consolidate individual peasant households into collective farms. Stalin believed that Ukrainian Nationalism compelled the peasantry to resist collectivization, and while fearing Ukrainian nationalistic elements would spread outside of Ukraine to other territories of the USSR, Stalin took measures to stop the development of national consciousness amongst Ukrainians living outside of Ukraine. This led to the Russification of thousands of ethnic Ukrainians. At this juncture, the language concessions proposed by Lenin were no longer applied throughout the Soviet Union.

Stalin blamed the rise of Ukrainian separatism on Bolshevik Mykola Skrypnyk, whom Stalin appointed as Ukraine’s Commissar of Education, replacing Oleksandr Shumsky. Mykola eventually killed himself, fearing he would be arrested. Oleksandr Shumsky, was later arrested for supporting anti-USSR propaganda and was executed on Stalin’s orders in the 1940s.

Chapter 6: The Holodomor

As a result of collectivism and the subsequent great famine (Holodomor) which killed millions of Ukrainians in the 1930s, many Ukrainian peasants were forced to migrate from the countryside into the cities. A large number of them found themselves having to learn the Russian language, as Ukrainian was being suppressed. The Holodomor was known as the Terror Famine and lasted between 1932 and 1933. It has become widely accepted in Ukraine as genocide of the Ukrainian people committed by the Soviet regime. Official estimates of the death toll range between 7 and 10 million Ukrainians. In the late 1920's, Stalin was seeking to end private ownership of land. So he introduced a program to collectivize farms. At this time, Ukraine was the major bread basket for the Soviet Union, due to its fertile soil. Under collectivization, grain quotas were increased and since grain would be confiscated by the state, the farmers and most rural Ukrainians had less grain to consume. Because so many farmers resisted giving up their land to the Soviet Union or having their land pooled into a collective coalition of farms, many were ultimately exiled. Meanwhile, anyone who attempted to alleviate their starvation by taking grain from fields or storage facilities were executed. Because of grain shortages, the Soviet Union would supply grain to farmers via a rationing system. By 1933, reports of mass starvation were highest in Kharkiv Oblast, Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Odessa, Vinnytsia, Donetsk oblasts, and Moldavian SSR. Many even resorted to cannibalism. A great number of people blamed collectivization policies for the famine, as peasants were forced to give up farms and livestock to state-owned farms, where they would work as laborers. This led to hundreds of peasant uprisings. Also, output expected by farmers was changed from the typical grain to other crops like sugar or cotton, which resulted in a large amount of grain going unharvested. In retrospect, it is certain that implementing the new system of collectivization led to a drastic decline of farming efficiency. It is also widely accepted that the famine was intentionally orchestrated by the Soviet Union in order to bring Ukraine and peasant rebellion under control through the use of starvation tactics.

Stalin instituted a five-year plan for the sake of accelerating industrialization and a forced collectivization of farms in 1928. In 1929, implementing collectivization became problematic since farming practices were already well-established in Ukraine and Southern Russia. Most peasants were independent farmers, a tradition reinforced by the Cossack way of life as a self-ruling people. Another factor that reinforced this individualism was the general resistance to Communist rule during the years between 1917 – 1921. Stalin's collectivization efforts coincided with the dekulakization campaign against rich peasants and rebels who resisted

collectivization. Rich peasants would be known kulaks. There were also grain-procurement campaigns, which were grain quotas that the state would expect farmers to meet for a very low price. Both dekulakization campaigns and grain procurement campaigns instilled fear in peasant farmers, who were afraid of being labeled kulaks. This served as a means of stoking fear in order to compel farmers to join collectives. The Soviets used harassment, intimidation, violence, and deportation as a way to punish those who resisted. Some Ukrainians, nonetheless, remained adamantly reluctant to join collective farms since they considered collectivization a form of expropriation. Those peasants who did join essentially allowed their private property to be seized, leaving themselves relegated to the status of being a dependent farm laborer. Many Ukrainian peasants considered this fate to be a secondary form of serfdom. So the resistance applied in reaction would often escalate into uprisings in which peasants would perpetrate violence against state officials. This would lead to Soviet authorities retaliating against peasant violence and protests with brute force. Of course, this was expected by the resisters. When taking everything into account, we see how the forced collectivization, grain quotas, dekulakization campaigns and the corresponding reaction and outrage amongst the Ukrainian peasantry could be disastrous in terms maintaining the efficient labor needed for agriculture. One can thus easily assess how the result of that would give way to massive grain shortages. Yet, Bolshevik leaders continued to propagate collectivization as the path to economic advancement and the true intention of Socialism. Furthermore, there was an oversight benefit of forming state controlled farms—it allowed for state supervision over the peasantry, during a time when Stalin was becoming increasingly suspicious. Moreover, collective farms were considered more beneficial than individual farms when it came to meeting targeted grain quotas. The Soviet Union wanted to accelerate industrialization through exports and also provide cheaper food for fast growing cities. The peasants however, bore the brunt of that burden, as it was the case often that grain targets were too high to meet. In 1930, the quota was achieved. But in 1931, climate and unrest over collectivization resulted in a much lower harvest that year. As Ukraine could not meet the grain quota, the Soviets nonetheless squeezed out whatever they could there, even resorting to confiscating grain from starving farmers. By December of 1931, famine had taken over and deaths as a result would rise in the first half of 1932. This alarmed Ukrainian officials. They wrote to Stalin requesting a reduction of grain-procurement targets. However, Stalin was angered by this request and insisted on maintaining the grain quotas, and then proceeded to blame the crisis on Ukrainian officials. He also became paranoid that Ukraine would attempt to secede from the Soviet Union if the crisis got worse. Unsurprisingly, Stalin would

state his desire to remove Ukraine's top leadership. He also passed the Five Ears of Corn law, which declared collective farm property as state property and theft of grain or other property punishable by death. While the grain quota was lowered, it was still unrealistic and by late 1932, mass starvation would break out in Ukraine. Stalin, nonetheless, employed coercive measures towards getting starving peasants to give up their grain. He banned trade and blocked entire villages, allowing no one to leave. Stalin also targeted party officials in Ukraine who were attempting to feed the starving peasants. Consequently, many party officials were fired, some were jailed and executed. Stalin sent two of his lieutenants, Molotov and Kaganovich to Ukraine in order to pressure party leaders there to conform to grain quotas. In October of 1932, Molotov and Kaganovich were sent to Ukraine with thousands of Communist Party officials to retrieve very ounce of grain, even storages that were hidden by starving peasants. These actions would further ignite the famine and lead to more starvation deaths in late 1932 and the first half of 1933. In addition to the famine, more oppressive measures on culture were applied in December of 1932, when a resolution was passed rolling back rights given to Ukraine—rights which pertained to the implementation of the Ukrainian language in Ukraine. Stalin had criticized Ukrainian leaders for taking advantage of language concessions in order to instigate Ukrainian nationalism both in Ukraine and in the Kuban. A second resolution was passed in January of 1933, which prevented peasants from leaving Ukraine in search of food in other places.

Pavel Postyshev was appointed Stalin's personal representative in Ukraine. As Stalin's envoy, Pavel Postyshev was given dictatorial powers to purge the Ukrainian Party of Ukrainian nationalists. He was sent into Ukraine in 1933 with Soviet Secret Police after ordering Ukrainian Party leadership to meet their quota for grain exportation, despite repeated warning of the mass starvation being caused by collectivization. There, he and over a 100,000 trusted party members from Russia would enforce laws to protect state property, standing between the Ukrainian farmers and their crops and livestock. They would also search homes and farms, confiscating any grain being withheld by starving Ukrainians. Postyshev unleashed a reign of terror on Communist party officials and academics in Ukraine suspected of being nationalists.

The Holodomor would have a devastating impact on Ukrainian national identity. The spread of the famine coincided with policies that rolled back Ukrainian language and cultural concessions instituted by the Soviet Union. This was followed by a crackdown on nationalistic elements within Ukraine, both within communist party circles and academia. Soviet policies during this time would stifle any sense of autonomy felt by the Ukrainian people. In the Kuban, many

Cossack farmers were deported and much of the region were deUkrainized. The time-frame of the Holodomor, which comprised of mass starvation and Soviet violence against Ukrainian officials, marked the shift in Soviet policy towards a more Russian-centered state. Stalin was acutely aware of the non-Russian nationalistic elements that arose during the Bolshevik revolution. He knew that any solidarity along ideological lines amongst both pro-Russian and non-Russian elements in the communist party could easily be broken by growing nationalism amongst non-Russian bolsheviks. Stalin observed the situation in Ukraine during the revolutionary period between 1917 and 1920. He noted their move for independence under the Central Rada, and had always considered that this non-Russian nationalism could be a possible roadblock towards installing Bolshevism in Ukraine. Stalin was always leery of this possibility, but yet prior to the famine, he would always take a conciliatory approach publicly to avoid giving offense to non-Russian nationalities in the Soviet Union. He did this by pointing out the dangers of Russian nationalism, or what he called "Great Russian Chauvinism." Nevertheless, when it came to Russia, Stalin was always certain that all of Russia was a solid base for Bolshevism, since, inner Russia with its homogeneous Russian population was the base of the Bolshevik revolution—while most of the counter-revolutionary components were situated in the southern and eastern border regions, which consisted of Cossacks, Tatars, Bashkirs, Kirghiz, Chechens, Ingush, Muslims, and Ukrainians. Yet Stalin may not have foreseen collectivization as something that Ukrainians would perceive to be a form of great Russian chauvinism, but he was nonetheless well aware of the difficulties in attempting to economically unite the republics of the Soviet Union. At the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in April 1923, Stalin warned of the danger that Russian nationalism posed to the Union:

The basis of this Union is the voluntary consent and the juridical equality of the members of the Union. Voluntary consent and equality—because our national programme starts out from the clause on the right of nations to exist as independent states, what was formerly called the right to self-determination. Proceeding from this, we must definitely say that no union of peoples into a single state can be durable unless it is based on absolutely voluntary consent, unless the peoples themselves wish to unite. The second basis is the juridical equality of the peoples which form the Union. That is natural. I am not speaking of actual equality—I shall come to that later—for the establishment of actual equality between nations which have forged ahead and backward nations is a very complicated, very difficult, matter that must take a number of years. I am speaking now about juridical equality. This equality finds

expression in the fact that all the republics, in this case the four republics: Transcaucasia, Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the R.S.F.S.R., forming the Union, enjoy the benefits of the Union to an equal degree and at the same time to an equal degree forgo certain of their independent rights in favour of the Union. If the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Republic are not each to have its own People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, it is obvious that the abolition of these Commissariats and the establishment of a common Commissariat of Foreign Affairs for the Union of Republics will entail a certain restriction of the independence which these republics formerly enjoyed, and this restriction will be equal for all the republics forming the Union. Obviously, if these republics formerly had their own People's Commissariats of Foreign Trade, and these Commissariats are now abolished both in the R.S.F.S.R. and in the other republics in order to make way for a common Commissariat of Foreign Trade for the Union of Republics, this too will involve a certain restriction of the independence formerly enjoyed in full measure, but now curtailed in favour of the common Union, and so on, and so forth. Some people ask a purely scholastic question, namely: do the republics remain independent after uniting? That is a scholastic question. Their independence is restricted, for every union involves a certain restriction of the former rights of the parties to the union. But the basic elements of independence of each of these republics certainly remain, if only because every republic retains the right to secede from the Union at its own discretion. Thus, the concrete form the national question has assumed under the conditions at present prevailing in our country is how to achieve the co-operation of the peoples in economic, foreign and military affairs. We must unite the republics along these lines into a single union called the U.S.S.R. Such are the concrete forms the national question has assumed at the present time. But that is easier said than done. The fact of the matter is that under the conditions prevailing in our country, there are, in addition to the factors conducive to the union of the peoples into one state, a number of factors which hinder this union. You know what the conducive factors are: first of all, the economic coming together of the peoples that was established prior to Soviet power and which was consolidated by Soviet power; a certain division of labour between the peoples, established before our time, but consolidated by us, by the Soviet power. That is the basic factor conducive to the union of the republics into a Union. The nature of Soviet power must be regarded as the second factor conducive to union. That is natural. Soviet power is the power of the workers, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which by its very nature disposes the labouring elements of the republics and peoples which form the Union to live in friendly relations with one another. That is natural.

And the third factor conducive to union is the imperialist encirclement, forming an environment in which the Union of Republics is obliged to operate. But there are also factors which hinder, which impede, this union. The principal force impeding the union of the republics into a single union is that force which, as I have said, is growing in our country under the conditions of the N.E.P.: Great-Russian chauvinism. It is by no means accidental, comrades, that the Smena-Vekh-ites have recruited a large number of supporters among Soviet officials. That is by no means accidental. Nor is it accidental that Messieurs the Smena-Vekhites are singing the praises of the Bolshevik Communists, as much as to say: You may talk about Bolshevism as much as you like, you may prate as much as you like about your internationalist tendencies, but we know that you will achieve what Denikin failed to achieve, that you Bolsheviks have resurrected, or at all events will resurrect, the idea of a Great Russia. All that is not accidental. Nor is it accidental that this idea has even penetrated some of our Party institutions. At the February Plenum, where the question of a second chamber was first raised, I witnessed how certain members of the Central Committee made speeches which were inconsistent with communism—speeches which had nothing in common with internationalism. All this is a sign of the times, an epidemic. The chief danger that arises from this is that, owing to the N.E.P., dominant-nation chauvinism is growing in our country by leaps and bounds, striving to obliterate all that is not Russian, to gather all the threads of government into the hands of Russians and to stifle everything that is not Russian. The chief danger is that with such a policy we run the risk that the Russian proletarians will lose the confidence of the formerly oppressed nations which they won in the October days, when they overthrew the landlords and the Russian capitalists, when they smashed the chains of national oppression within Russia, withdrew the troops from Persia and Mongolia, proclaimed the independence of Finland and Armenia and, in general, put the national question on an entirely new basis. Unless we all arm ourselves against this new, I repeat, Great-Russian chauvinism, which is advancing, creeping, insinuating itself drop by drop into the eyes and ears of our officials and step by step corrupting them, we may lose down to the last shreds the confidence we earned at that time. It is this danger, comrades, that we must defeat at all costs. Otherwise we are threatened with the prospect of losing the confidence of the workers and peasants of the formerly oppressed peoples, we are threatened with the prospect of a rupture of the ties between these peoples and the Russian proletariat, and this threatens us with the danger of a crack being formed in the system of our dictatorship.

Initially, Ukrainization policy in the USSR was intended to solicit

proSoviet sentiments, both amongst Ukrainians living in Ukraine and abroad in Poland. In 1921, prior to the Holodomor, the Communist Party issued the New Economic Policy, which allowed farmers to maintain private farms and freely place surplus grain on the market in exchange for paying a tax to the state. These measures would be instrumental in initially getting Ukrainians to adhere to Soviet rule. However, initial attempts by the state to make concessions for Ukrainian language and cultural development in Ukraine may have been construed by Ukrainian nationalists as a green-light to overassert Ukrainian nationalism and autonomy. This led to allegations that Ukrainian communist leaders were attempting to Ukrainize the Russian proletariat in Ukraine by force. While Stalin did have his reservations about Ukraine, he didn't believe that concessions which were meant to garner positive response to Soviet rule, would trigger this type of extreme Ukrainian nationalism. Up to this point, it was always maintained publicly that Russian nationalism would be the culprit. In 1926, Stalin excoriated Ukraine's minister of education, Oleksandr Shumsky and prominent communist writer, Mykola Khvyliovyy. Stalin felt that in seeking to Ukrainize the Russianspeaking proletariat there, Shumsky would alienate Ukrainians from the Soviet Union and from Russians in general. This fear grew into paranoia in the ensuing years and gave way to the forceful policies that would have tragic consequences for the Ukrainian people and upend any growing nationalistic sentiments amongst them. While Stalin continued to point out the dangers of Russian nationalism, much of the Soviet crackdown on nationalism would target Ukrainian version of it. In 1931, Ukrainian intellectuals suspected of having ties to Ukrainian nationalists in Poland were arrested and jailed. In 1933, Stalin decided to replace Ukraine's top leadership and by 1934, Stalin would consider Ukrainian nationalism the major threat to the Soviet Union. Shifting from his previous stance that Russian nationalism was the greatest threat to the Soviet Union, Stalin now pointed out both Russian nationalism and Ukrainian Nationalism to be the real danger. In his report to Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress in January of 1934, Stalin stated:

What is the deviation towards nationalism—regardless whether it is a matter of the deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism or the deviation towards local nationalism? The deviation towards nationalism is the adaptation of the internationalist policy of the working class to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie. The deviation towards nationalism reflects the attempts of "one's own," "national" bourgeoisie to undermine the Soviet system and to restore capitalism. The source of both these deviations, as you see, is the same. It is a departure from Leninist internationalism. If you want to keep both deviations under fire, then aim primarily against

this source, against those who depart from internationalism—regardless whether it is a matter of the deviation towards local nationalism or the deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism. (Stormy applause.) There is a controversy as to which deviation represents the chief danger: the deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism, or the deviation towards local nationalism. Under present conditions, this is a formal and, therefore, a pointless controversy. It would be foolish to attempt to give ready-made recipes suitable for all times and for all conditions as regards the chief and the lesser danger. Such recipes do not exist. The chief danger is the deviation against which we have ceased to fight, thereby allowing it to grow into a danger to the state. (Prolonged applause.) In the Ukraine, only very recently, the deviation towards Ukrainian nationalism did not represent the chief danger; but when the fight against it ceased and it was allowed to grow to such an extent that it linked up with the interventionists, this deviation became the chief danger. The question as to which is the chief danger in the sphere of the national question is determined not by futile, formal controversies, but by a Marxist analysis of the situation at the given moment, and by a study of the mistakes that have been committed in this sphere.

There was an existing backdrop of Ukraine nationalism and Soviet hostility that compels one to presume that Stalin was a perpetrator of genocide against the Ukrainian people. This tension may have been further cultivated by the fact that the Soviet Union had to continuously remind itself on how integral Ukraine was to its standing as a nation. And on the heels orchestrating this “Terror Famine”, Stalin does not consign the people of Ukraine to being an enemy of the Soviet nation. He instead proceeds to present the Russian segment of the Soviet nation as the big brother to the other non-Russian republics. In this regard, Stalin cannot be deemed “genocidal.” He is in fact and without question, fratricidal. There has to be a distinction between the two, since genocide would have a backdrop of ethnic tension. In contrast, we see that the precursor to the Holocaust was an alienation of a smaller group of people(Jews) from a larger group of people(Germans), both with different ethnic backgrounds. Hitler made an enemy of Jews and held no intention to accommodate them into the German state. The hostility was clear at the outset and the outcome was predictable. But Stalin on the other hand believed he was acting in accordance with brotherly virtues by trying to economically unite both the Russian and non-Russian republics within the Soviet Union. And when things didn’t pan out as he expected, he lashed out at Ukraine and unleashed a horrific and tragic circumstance upon them, all while remaining keen on maintaining and asserting what he believed was his “big brother”

outlook, since Russians saw no ethnic distinction between them and Ukrainians. This is why the Holodomor has to be relegated more-so to fratricide than genocide. This fratricidal element played out microcosmically during the times of Kievan Rus', when Vladimir the Great rose to power, having to contend with the fratricidal element within his own family. With the Holodomor, this fratricidal element within the East Slavic ethnology displayed itself at the macro-cosmic level between Russia and Ukraine and resulted in the deaths of millions of Ukrainians.

As Russification re-surged in Soviet territories, the main Soviet newspaper, Pravda, published on January 30, 1936 a front-page photo of Joseph Stalin embracing a happy young Buriat girl while also holding a bouquet of flowers. The image was meant to underscore the leading role and impact of Russians throughout the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Stalin asserted a tone of brotherly subjugation, when in a speech at the 17th Party Congress in 1934, stated it was not the rise of Ukrainian nationalism that he considered a threat to the USSR, but the lack of resistance to it that allowed such a movement to become more insulated against the Soviet nation as a whole. Stalin's goal here, after the Holodomor, was to present the USSR as a family of different nations led by Russians, and also justify any measures taken to keep this family together. Throughout the 1930s, Stalin rarely missed an opportunity to mention the Soviet Union and the Russians in the same sentence. We see that his program for the USSR was becoming more ethnocentric in favor of Russian. Even the tsars, during this time, whom were previously anathematized and excoriated by the Bolsheviks, had come to be exhorted for their achievements as Russians. A number of films were produced, depicting the tsars as great Russians. In 1937, the film "Peter the first" was personally approved by Stalin.

Chapter 7: World War II and the Aftermath

A few years prior to World War II as Stalin prepared the nation for possible invasion, he began a program of purging various institutions of elements and people considered to be potential traitors. Germans, Polish, and Japanese were targeted first, followed by Ukrainian nationalists. Between 1937 and 1938, 335,000 of these people were arrested and jailed. 73% were executed. Stalin also feared that Ukrainian nationals living outside of the USSR could provide safe passage for enemy forces. As a result, the Soviet Union invaded Poland from the east and then established a non-aggression pact with Germany, allowing the Germans to take Poland via the west. After Hitler, dictator of Germany, successfully invaded and conquered Paris, Stalin moved to identify potential supporters of a German invasion of Ukraine. Both Polish and Ukrainian nationalists were targeted. After the Soviet invasion of Poland, 22000 Polish military and intelligence personnel were executed. 11,000 Ukrainian nationalists were deported from Polish territories to Siberia. Hitler would invade the Soviet Union in June 1941, breaking their nonaggression pact. The Soviets, during their retreat, implemented a scorched-earth policy—evacuating personnel, executing prisoners, destroying buildings, crops, and mines. This was done to minimize the German army's access to resources when the winter would ensue. By the fall of that year, Ukraine and many of the USSR's non-Russian provinces were taken by the Germans, who were advancing eastward. Many of those who fought for the Red Army (army and air force of the USSR) in non-Russian provinces held a very poor sense of loyalty to Moscow. Ukrainians initially welcomed the Nazi advance, since there had already been a widespread belief that Germany was a natural ally, and many Ukrainians in Galicia were opposed to both Poland and the USSR, and considered the Nazis as their liberator. Ukrainian nationalists, upon Germany's entry into Lviv, had declared statehood. However, this was immediately revoked by the Nazis, who would arrest and jail Ukrainian nationalists who made the decree. The Nazis then moved to institute ethnic purges of Ukrainian Jews, and also left intact the collective farms instituted previously by Stalin. The remaining Ukrainians were forced to work on behalf of the German war effort and many were shipped to Germany as a result. Parts of Ukraine was transferred to Poland and Romania, while the rest would be occupied by German forces. Cultural activities and education were restricted. The Ukrainian Orthodox church, however, was allowed to convene its operations. Galicia was perhaps one of the only places in Ukraine that was permitted by the Nazis to function civically and culturally. Due to political restrictions, anyhow, many Ukrainians nationalists would go underground and hone their ideology. Secret Communist party groups were established and so was the Ukrainian

Insurgent Army(UPA), both of whom conducted guerrilla warfare against the Nazis and each other. However, the UPA did collaborate with the Nazis against Soviet and Polish forces later in the war. After the Soviet victory against the Nazis at the battle of Stalingrad in 1943, Stalin launched a counteroffensive, eventually driving the Germans out of Ukraine. By October of 1944, all of the Soviet Union was reclaimed by the Soviets. The Polish-Ukrainian border was redrawn and Poland agreed to renounce claim over Volhynia and Galicia, and deport Ukrainians to their new western territory. During World War II, 5-7 million Ukrainians loss their lives. Over 700 cities and towns were destroyed, leaving 10 million people homeless. After the World War II, the UPA would continue to conduct guerrilla activities against the Soviets until the early 1950s.

Just prior to World War II, Stalin attempted to revive the historical narrative of legendary Ukrainian nationalist, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky. Film and theater productions were allowed to present the narrative in a way that fit the big brother model that the Soviet Union was propagating throughout the nation—Russians were to be perceived as the protective big brother in a family of nations. Bohdan Khmelnytsky, after establishing Ukraine, reached out to the tsar and submitted Ukraine to the protection of the Russian empire in 1654. This move was misconstrued by later tsars as Khmelnytsky's intention to re-unify the East Slavic races and the Rus' lands. However, the treaty of Pereyaslav signed in 1654 insisted that Ukraine would retain its sovereignty and independence along with submitting to the protection of the Russian empire. Yet, Ukraine choosing to position itself under the wing of the Russia at that time fit right along with USSR propaganda, which presented Russians as the protective figure of the nation. Film and theater productions were only allowed to portray that side of the Khmelnytsky narrative. When non-Russian members of the USSR failed to deter the Nazi advance, Stalin then reasserted Russian cultural dominance and removed all film and theater presentations about Khmelnytsky. Stalin also reopened the Russian Orthodox churches for worship, but allowed the Greek Catholic ones to remain suppressed. Stalin eventually placed the Greek Catholic church under the authority of the Russian Orthodox. And when Russia achieved victory against the Germans in World War II, Stalin was sure to publicly recognize both the USSR and the Russian ethnicity as the primary agents conducive to the nation's success.

After Joseph Stalin died 1953, Nikita Khrushchev came to power in the Soviet Union, serving as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964. Khrushchev proceeded to denounce Stalin's crimes and undo much of the brutal policies that defined his tenure as Soviet leader. Initiative was also taken to end the Russification of non-Russian

republics. In 1937, Stalin had appointed Khrushchev head of the communist party in Ukraine, which had been the site of numerous purges. And as soon as Khrushchev would begin his tenure then, which ended in 1949, the pace of those purges increased. However, once he became head of the USSR in 1953, he allowed the Ukrainian communist party to have a party boss that was ethnically Ukrainian. In 1954, Khrushchev would then launch a large scale celebration commemorating Bohdan Khmelnytsky's acceptance of Russian dominion with the Pereyaslav treaty of 1654. This tribute was a far cry from how the Russia/Ukraine union was viewed in the 1920s, when their tie was condemned as evil in Russian literature. In the 1930s, much of the Russian discourse on the subject softened considerably. However, under Khrushchev, the union would become regarded as a positive for the Russian state.

Since Stalin had failed to achieve true Marxism in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev announced that he would attempt to achieve communism the way it was intended. The result of this, as Marxist dogma conveys, would be a dissolution of national differences. This forecast hastened party leaders to move forward with merging the nationalities. At the 22nd Party Congress in 1961, Khrushchev declared that the various nationalities within the USSR would come to be understood as "Soviet people." Nonetheless, the party maintained that this new amalgamation of nationalities under the designation of "Soviet" should still adhere to the foundations of Russian language and culture. And yet this served to once again compel the state to install Russification policies. Khrushchev's tone changed considerably after 1957, when he began to purge Ukraine of nationalistic elements and introduce measures aimed at installing numerous facets of Russian culture. In 1958, the USSR revoked the right of non-Russian children to be taught in their native language. This by default set everyone on the course of learning Russian since it was mostly Russian that was spoken at universities and high-paying jobs. In Ukraine, publications in the Ukrainian language decreased incrementally between 1959 – 1965, while the number of publications in the Russian language increased. The Russification of the education system in Ukraine even deterred student interest in Ukrainian as a subject.

Nikita Khrushchev was removed from power in 1964 in a coup orchestrated by party members, led by Leonid Brezhnev, who would become the new leader of the Soviet Union. While Khrushchev stated an intention to achieve true Marxist socialism in the USSR, Brezhnev insisted that it was already done. However, Brezhnev did continue with the idea of one "Soviet" nationality. This would become the central theme of his policy. His efforts would attempt to summarize the way of life in the Soviet Union as a component of "Soviet" nationality. Despite this, the party remained steadfast on asserting

the Russian language as the language of the Soviet nation. Brezhnev began initiating policies that would further remove non-Russian languages from the education system. In 1970, a decree ordered that all graduate theses be written in Russia. This gave way to a rising Russian nationalism in the Soviet Union amidst an attempt at uniting all the different nationalities under one Soviet umbrella. Unsurprisingly, this did not bother Moscow as much as non-Russian nationalism did. When other non-Russian nationalities began to assert their cultural identity, the USSR moved quickly to suppress and silence them. Some were sent to the Gulag. In 1972, first secretary of the communist party of Ukraine was arrested for asserting Ukrainian identity and other alleged deviations. In 1954, a secret police force known as the KGB was established under Khrushchev and was instrumental in weeding out non-Russian nationalistic elements and after 1972 became very active in purging Ukrainian nationalists from Ukrainian institutions. The number of ethnic Ukrainians with Russian as their mother tongue began to increase as Russification accelerated between 1970 and 1980. By 1980, the USSR had failed to achieve both true Marxism and the one Soviet nation cause. Meanwhile, non-Soviet Russian identity began to reassert itself through literature. A new genre called “village prose” glorified the old Russian village way of life. Many Russian nationalistic thinkers found their sense of identity in the old Russian imperial regimes. They also sought to integrate the history of East Slavic races into a Russian framework. Ukrainian lands and all Eastern Slavs had come to be known as Russian during this developing outlook. In reaction to this growing Russification, the Ukrainian Helsinki group was formed in 1975. This group argued Ukrainians had the same rights to cultural identity and expression as the Russians did. They also questioned the authority of Moscow to decide the course of various facets of Ukrainian policy. Many members of the Helsinki group were arrested and sent to the Gulag. After 1985, the Soviet Union would enter its last remaining years as a nation.

Chapter 8: Fall of the Soviet Union

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was elected General Secretary of the Soviet Union. The nation was already experiencing economic issues and over the last few decades, had failed to keep pace with western countries. Gorbachev sought to implement economic reforms by introducing measures to scale back state control over the means of production. Previously, the Soviet Union was spending enormous sums of money on arms production, all while trying to maintain a command economy. When the government would present a production goal, usually they would spend much of their resources on businesses geared for that particular industry. Any businesses, within the industry, that were lagging behind would receive further subsidies. This strategy ultimately gave way to a highly inefficient economy. It reached a point in which a dichotomy arose in the Soviet Union, where what was really happening economically differentiated greatly with what was being presented. Gorbachev thus tried to implement an economy that would thrive on competition, but yet not completely undermine state influence on business. He also pushed a “glasnost” policy of openness and transparency, and allowed citizens of the Soviet Union exercise freedom of speech. People were also allowed to vote for other parties during elections. Gorbachev felt that more competition would help the Soviet state politically and economically. However, these new freedoms would ultimately give way to independence movements, which had a ripple effect throughout the Soviet Union, leading to its eventual demise. During the collapse of the Soviet Union from 1988 to 1991, Moscow made a last ditch effort to stifle the revival of local languages. But as Estonia and Lithuania broke from the Soviet Union in 1988 and 1990, Moscow lost its grip on the nation. Then General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, having survived a 1991 coup orchestrated in reaction to his failed reforms, handed over his presidential powers to Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Russian Federation. The attempted coup led to most republics claiming their independence. Ukraine declared their independence in August of 1991. In December of that year, the Belovezh accords were signed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and Belarusian Parliament Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich, formally ending the USSR and establishing a commonwealth of independent states (CIS). All of the Soviet Republics, except Georgia and the Baltics, joined the CIS. Prior to the Belovezh accords, Yeltsin was opposed to Ukrainian independence and tried to send a delegation to Ukraine to speak to the new leaders there. Yeltsin suggested that Ukraine opt to a commonwealth citizenship. This proposal was rejected. After centuries of Russian influence, Ukraine’s Ukrainian speaking demographic would live mostly in central and western Ukraine. While

those living in the eastern and southern portion of Ukraine would be Russian speaking and thus have closer ties to Russia. This would prove to be a pivotal factor in Ukrainian policy in the next 3 decades.

In December of 1991, elections were held in Ukraine. Leonid Kravchuk would be sworn in as president in late December. In 1992, state symbols associated with the Ukrainian People's Republic, which lasted from 1918 to 1920, were re-adopted in Ukraine. These included the blue and yellow flag, the trident as the state coat of arms, and the national anthem entitled "Ukraine has not perished yet." However, many of the Soviet era institutions were still in place even after the independence referendum in 1991, but just under new names. The Council of Ministers was now the Cabinet of Ministers. The Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, which was elected in 1990, became the Verkhovna Rada in 1991 and served its full term until 1994. Much of the old state machinery was still there.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs would see significant growth as Ukraine began to prioritize international recognition of its sovereignty and independence. Meanwhile, Russia would pursue a policy promoting the reintegration of former Soviet republics into the new Commonwealth of Independent States(CIS). Ukraine remained resistant to such ideas and continuously opposed proposals for CIS citizenship. However, this would rank below the issues of Crimea and Black Sea fleet in terms what would ignite tensions with Russia. In the early 90s, Russian officials questioned Ukraine's control over Crimea. In 1954, Khrushchev transferred control over Crimea to Ukraine as a way to express friendship between Russia and Ukraine. The Russians, nonetheless, believed that the transfer was unconstitutional and illegitimate.

In 1992, Russian separatists would garner enough representation in the Crimean parliament to declare independence, but Ukraine would rescind this declaration. Concurrently, Russia moved to officially declare Khrushchev's transfer of Crimea to Ukraine as invalid. Crimea consisted of a largely ethnic Russian or Russianspeaking demographic and many considered Crimea to be of historical significance to Russian history. It was a base for the Soviet Black Sea Fleet and the setting for a number of major military events in Russian history. Tensions on this matter were settled between Russia and Ukraine when Boris Yeltsin and Kravchuk agreed to establish joint control over the Black Sea Fleet for 3 years before deciding on who would control it later on.

During the Cold War, a period of heightened tension between the USSR and the United States after World War II, Russia had developed a large number of nuclear missiles and stored them in various territories of the Soviet Union—Ukraine being one of them. Just before he died in 1953, Stalin pushed an economic policy that put a considerable portion of the Soviet budget into the economic and

industrial development of Ukraine. Thus Ukraine had become the center of Soviet arms development. Many of the USSR's best scientists came from Ukraine. However, this legacy was tainted by the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant explosion in 1986, which was the worst nuclear reactor accident in history. The reactor was located near the city of Pripjat, located in northern Ukraine.

In the early 1990s, Ukraine's Minister of Defense claimed that Ukraine had 5000 nuclear weapons in its jurisdiction, along with 176 intercontinental ballistic missiles with 1240 nuclear warheads. In 1995, Ukraine would return the nuclear missiles to Russia in exchange for Russia recognizing Ukrainian sovereignty. Ukraine would also be compensated with fuel from Russia and aid from the United States, along with guarantees of its territorial integrity. Prior to this arrangement, the bulk of Ukraine's support came from its western neighbors: Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania, all who considered Ukraine's independence a shield from Russian foreign policy. The US would eventually share this outlook and help reinforce Ukrainian sovereignty. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian economy, which was initially deemed favorable at the outset of their independence, declined significantly throughout the decade of the 1990s. Their GDP dropped 60% and their inflation rates soared. Ukraine's economy had been depended on arms production intended for Russia, who no longer had demand for outdated equipment. Russia was also charging Ukraine high prices for oil and gas. It also didn't help that Ukraine's president Kravchuck paid minimal attention to economic reforms, since most of his focus was geared toward state building.

Prime Minister Vitold Fokin would opt to subsidize factories in order to curtail rising unemployment. This would trigger hyperinflation, even in Russia since Ukraine's currency at that time was the ruble. The ruble zone was established after the breakup of the Soviet Union. In response to Ukrainian triggered inflation in Russia, the Russian Central bank would no longer honor ruble credits issued by the Ukrainian National bank. Subsequently, Ukraine would issue a provisional currency called the karbovanets. However, this did not lead to better economic reforms. The new prime minister, Leonid Kuchma, tried to implement monetary controls and privatization, but unpaid pensions and wages owed to workers throughout the country led to a massive worker strike amongst miners in Donbas. Satisfying their demands required the Ukrainian government to print large sums of money, which only further fueled inflation. After Kuchma's resignation, the next prime minister, Yukhym Zviatkovsky, would move to subsidize failing factories and farms. This led to a complete collapse of the karbovanets, as hyperinflation ensued. The currency became worthless during a brief period in 1993. Rising prices wiped out savings. Salaries could not keep up with increasing costs of living, leading much of the population having to resort to a

barter system of good and services. In 1993, 75% of Ukrainians lived below the poverty line. Life expectancy dropped and emigration increased. Many Ukrainians headed for Israel, US, or Germany. Black market commerce grew. Elites began looting state assets, and selling subsidized Russian oil and gas around Europe at world prices. The Communist Party which was banned in 1991 resurfaced in the city of Donetsk. Their goal was to restore the old Soviet System and make Russian the official second language. They were successful in being able to elicit a sense of nostalgia amongst the elderly as their membership rose to 130,000. Many of the elderly still had fond memories of life under the Soviet regime. And so these remnants of the Soviet Union still present in the Ukraine government made it difficult for Kravchuk to work with the Verkhovna Rada. There were numerous power struggles within the government, as Kravchuk tried to embrace a nationalistic outlook of Ukrainian history that portrayed Russia as the longstanding oppressor of the Ukrainian people. This appealed to many of the new elites on the right in Ukraine, who understood the necessity of Ukrainian language and culture in state building. Their view of Ukraine was an ethnocentric one that had to suppress non-Ukrainian elements. Kravchuk, however, even with his pro-Ukrainian stance, opted not to force Ukrainian language and culture. He did, nonetheless, garner considerable backlash in his insistence on public use of the blue and yellow flag, trident state emblem, and "Ukraine has not yet perished" national anthem, all of which alienated most of Russian-speaking populations in eastern Ukraine. He also supported the Uniate church over the Russian Orthodox. While his efforts aided the permeation of Ukrainian language throughout Ukraine, they also provoked disrepute from Russian-speaking Ukrainians in eastern and southern Ukraine.

By 1994, pro-Russian separatism would flare up in Crimea. In response to these growing developments, the Ukraine government began to reduce the Ukrainization efforts as parliamentary elections were underway. However, the Communist Party would win 25% of the seats and become the largest party in the Verkhovna Rada. Later that summer, Kravchuk would lose the presidential election to the pro-Russian Leonid Kuchma. Yet after promising to preserve Russian culture and Ukraine's ties to Russia, Kuchma decided to shift towards a more Ukrainian centered cultural assertion since a pro-Ukrainian outlook gave legitimacy to his power and position as president. Understandably, he did not want to garner the reputation of being a puppet for Russia. Once in office, Kuchma would pursue closer ties with the United States, which resulted in Ukraine receiving considerable financial aid from them by the late 1990s. Kuchma would also enter into a cooperation agreement with NATO under the Partnership for Peace program in 1995. In 1997, Ukraine and NATO signed onto "Charter on a Distinctive Partnership." Concerned about

this, Russia would sign a friendship treaty with Ukraine, in which Russia would recognize Ukraine's sovereignty and their rights to the Black Sea Fleet. Kuchma also put an end to the pro-Russian separatist movement in Crimea in 1996. With politics in Ukraine being marred by crime and corruption through much of the 1990s, which provoked protests throughout the country, the country was beginning stabilize as a state under Kuchma. Ukraine also established a new constitution in 1996, and this would help stabilize their political system. That same year, a new currency was created, the hryvnia. However, the government would continue to spend excessively, trying to meet pension and salary requirements in a timely manner. This strategy was partly for the sake of keeping support for the communists at bay. The excess spending, still and all, caused oil and gas debts to Russia to increase significantly.

After Ukraine announced economic reforms, they became eligible for International Monetary Fund (IMF) support. The IMF's financial support was based on Ukraine's ability to meet inflation and tax collection targets. Higher taxes would drown small businesses, and efforts to privatize industry were hijacked by the wealthy oligarchs, who would buyout enterprises for small sums and still benefit from government subsidies provided to those businesses, leaving little incentive to improve efficiency and productivity. They were also benefiting from a lower tax obligation. These oligarchs, for the most part, were able to use their wealth to gain considerable political influence in Ukraine. While Kuchma was instrumental in stabilizing Ukraine politically, the economic situation during his tenure still left much to be desired, and consequently, in 1998, many began to rally around the Communist party, whom once again gained the majority of seats in the Rada. However, presidential elections in 1999 went in Kuchma's favor, as he was elected to a second term, and during which, this time, economic recovery would ensue. The capitalists in Ukraine discovered new profitable enterprises, such as steel exports. Many private businesses would discover their market niches, which led to the payout of higher salaries and subsequently more consumer spending. The Russian economy also began to improve. This had a positive trickle-down effect on Ukraine. The only roadblock to complete economic recovery were the large amounts of debt Ukraine owed to IMF, the World Bank, and Russia. Kuchma would thus appoint Viktor Yushchenko as prime minister. Yushchenko already had a background in banking as head of the National Bank. With his deputy prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko, Yushchenko would launch a crackdown on illegal profit schemes, such as the illegal resale of stolen Russian oil in Europe at world prices. He would also lift tax exemptions granted to oligarchs. This would bring billions of dollars into the Ukrainian government. Yushchenko then moved to lower taxes for small businesses. These reforms would raise 4 billion USD

for Ukraine. The year 2000 became the first year of economic growth for Ukraine since it declared independence in 1991. Unexpectedly, all of this was actually to the dismay of Kuchma, whose inner circle comprised of wealthy oligarchs, many of whom were affected by Yushchenko's crackdown. Meanwhile, both Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko's popularity grew in Ukraine.

Kuchma's links to wealthy oligarchs would give rise to reports about his role in numerous scams perpetrated by them. One such person writing about the alleged corruption in the Kuchma administration, was Ukrainian journalist Heorhiy Gongadze. His subsequent disappearance would raise alarm and in November of 2000, his headless body was discovered in a forest outside of Kiev. A short while later, audio recordings surfaced and seemed to show that Kuchma ordered his subordinates to carry out the execution. This scandal triggered protests throughout Ukraine and shed a light on corruption deeply embedded within the Ukrainian government. Socialist leader, Oleksandr Moroz would later that month reveal the existence of 300 hours worth of recordings made secretly by Mykola Melnychenko, which reveal what sounded like Kuchma's voice asking his security service chief to "take care" of Gongadze, even suggesting deporting him to Georgia so he could be abducted by Chechen guerrillas. Melnychenko was later granted asylum by the United States. After Melnychenko's revelation, some doubts still lingered about the authenticity of the voices. Later Kuchma would confirm that it was actually him speaking on the recording, but would also claim that the implicating passages were doctored. Yet, much of what he says on the tapes revealed a private side unseen in public view. This private side of him was foul mouthed, misogynistic and antisemitic. The tapes also confirmed the presence of corruption within the Ukrainian government, infractions such as election fraud, money laundering, and illegal arms dealing. It was discovered that Kuchma approved the sale of 100 million dollars worth of weapons to Iraq, including high tech radar systems which could detect stealth bombers. These revelations appalled the Ukrainian public and many embarked upon anti-Kuchma protests. The oligarchs, however, attempted to remove both Tymoshenko and Yushchenko from their positions. They successfully engineered Tymoshenko's removal. In 2001, oligarch-influenced parties in the Verkhovna Rada would join forces with the Communists and successfully manage to unseat Yushchenko.

Nevertheless, the Kuchma scandal would place a dark cloud over a good economic year for Ukraine, as just a month prior in October of 2000, Russia signed a strategic partnership deal with the European Union, agreeing to recognize the right of former Soviet states to make treaties with other nations. Kuchma attempted to salvage his worsening reputation by officially declaring Ukraine's intention to

join NATO. He even offered to send Ukrainian troops to Iraq in 2003. Kuchma's failure to revamp his reputation drew Ukraine back into the Russia's sphere of influence. Russian's state owned multinational energy company, Gazprom, moved in, demanding payments for subsidized oil and gas. Russian oligarchs also got involved, demanding Kuchma to approve the sale of other assets. Nevertheless, this influx of Russian capital would further bolster the Ukrainian economy. However, economic ties with Russia would have conditions. Now under Russian influence, Kuchma pushed through Verkhovna Rada legislation a Russia-based proposal to form a "Common Economic Space" with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

Chapter 9: Start of Ukraine's Cultural and Linguistic Conflict

While the Ukrainian economy was experiencing heightened economic growth, things took a negative turn when in 2004, Pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovych was elected president of Ukraine. The elections were believed to be rigged, since leading up to the election, Yushchenko was an overwhelming favorite, having gained enormous support for his campaign which focused on economic reform and clean government. Subsequent outcry across Ukraine, over the elections, led to heightened support for the opposition candidate, Viktor Yushchenko. However, during this unrest, which was called the Orange Revolution, Viktor Yushchenko fell ill, and physicians discovered that he had been poisoned. Unsurprisingly, Russia was considered a prime suspect. The revolution nonetheless continued and ultimately brought Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko to power as president and prime minister respectively. Yanukovych, however, would become prime minister again in 2006. The disputes surrounding the Orange Revolution led to Russia stopping gas supplies to Ukraine, which led to oil shortages in other countries. Russia supplies the EU with natural gas, through a pipeline that goes through Ukraine. Ukraine was being accused of stealing some of that gas in order to supply its domestic needs. In 2 years, the Ukrainian economy tumbled 15% during the 2008-2009 Ukrainian financial crisis. In what seemed like an attempt to appease Russia, Yushchenko withdrew Ukrainian forces sent to Iraq to support NATO. But Russia did not buy this gesture because Yushchenko had already made it clear that he intended to integrate Ukraine into a partnership with both the EU and NATO. Another factor pitting Yushchenko against Russia was how during the 2008 Russia-Georgia war, Yushchenko would meet with the leaders of Poland and the Baltic states, which are places that Russia considered to be the breeding ground of NATO's anti-Russian policy. The 2008 Russo-Georgia war was a brief 12-day conflict between pro-Russian separatists in Georgia and the Georgian government. It began on the heels of deteriorating relations between Georgia and Russia, which was followed by pro-Russian separatists in Georgia declaring autonomous the republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. After speculation on the scale of Russian military involvement, a ceasefire was reached on August 12th 2008. Moreover, tension between Russia and Ukraine would remain unsettled as Yushchenko would also call for the removal of Soviet era symbols in Ukraine, while at the same time honoring publicly Ukrainian insurgents who fought against the Soviets in World War II. These gestures would offend Moscow and many in Russia would consider these measures as an attempt to falsify history. Yushchenko also shunned Putin's proposal to jointly commemorate the 300th year anniversary of the Battle of Poltava in 1709, opting to instead

celebrate the with the Swedish government and commemorate the partnership between Cossack leader Ivan Mazepa and Sweden's King Charles XII against Russia during the battle.

Yanukovych would become president of Ukraine in 2010, and in 2013, he opted not to push forward with an EU deal that would have given Ukraine political and financial support. He instead chose to lean Ukraine in the direction of a Russia-focused Eurasian economic union. This decision led to widespread protests throughout Ukraine. These protests were known as the Euromaidan protests and would lead to the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution. During the Euromaidan protests, Ukrainians expressed their outrage at Yanukovych's refusal to sign a free trade agreement with the EU. However, things would escalate as clashes between riot police and protesters turned violent. 130 people were killed during the clash. On February 21st, president Yanukovych and the leaders of the parliamentary opposition officially agreed to convene early elections and establish the formation of an interim unity government. The following day after the Verkhovna Rada Committee voted to remove Viktor Yanukovych from the post of president of Ukraine, Yanukovych fled to Russia. Russia did not recognize the interim government, stating that the Ukrainian procedures used to remove him were nothing more than a coup against Yanukovych. As protesters proceeded to take control of the capital buildings, the parliament declared that Yanukovych was officially no longer president of Ukraine. The vote was 328-to-0. After Yanukovych subsequently fled the country and went to Russia, he declared that he was still the acting president of Ukraine. Many pro-Russian separatists in eastern and southern Ukraine supported Yanukovych's decision not to sign the EU deal. However, Yanukovych would be replaced by Oleksandr Turchynov, who was appointed as Ukraine's acting president, and whom Russia did not recognize as legitimate. Meanwhile, Russia intervened and sent special forces to Crimea, where the majority of Ukrainians identify as Russian and have Russia as their native language. In a referendum, the Ukrainians in Crimea voted to leave Ukraine and join Russia, allowing Russia to annex Crimea in February/March 2014. After the referendum, both the UN and Ukraine rejected the vote, pointing to agreements that Russia signed, where Russia agreed to recognize and uphold the sovereignty of Ukraine. Nevertheless, the Russian military pushed forward and laid siege to Ukrainian military bases in Crimea, forcing Ukraine's armed forces to withdraw. The president of Russia, Vladimir Putin gave his victory speech in March 2014:

"In people's hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia....Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. This is the location of ancient Khersones, where Prince Vladimir was baptised. His spiritual feat of adopting

Orthodoxy predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilisation and human values that unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian empire are also in Crimea. This is also Sevastopol – a legendary city with an outstanding history, a fortress that serves as the birthplace of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Crimea is Balaklava and Kerch, Malakhov Kurgan and Sapun Ridge. Each one of these places is dear to our hearts, symbolising Russian military glory and outstanding valour”

In March of 2014, Yanukovych signed a letter giving Russia permission to act militarily in Ukraine for the sake of restoring order. And while under threat of ethnic conflict after Russia's annexation of Crimea, the pro-Russian separatists were directed to instigate unrest throughout Ukraine in exchange for Russian funding. The main focus of the Russian government was securing the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine, which are collectively called the Donbas region. Russia wanted the pro-Russian separatists to establish a puppet state there so that gas and other supplies like water could flow into Crimea. The water canals in Donbas became a major focus of the conflict because after the annexation of Crimea, Ukraine blocked the supply of water flowing into Crimea via the North Crimean Canal, keeping 90% of its water from reaching the peninsula.

Protests broke out between pro-Russian Ukrainians and pro-Ukrainian Ukrainians. The Pro-Russian protesters gathered and attempted to take control of the Donetsk RSA between March 1st and March 6th. They were subsequently dispersed by the Security Service of Ukraine. In April, about 2000 pro-Russian Ukrainians gathered in Donetsk called for a referendum similar to the one in Crimea a month before. Soon, the protesters proceeded to breach the RSA building and occupy the first 2 floors. They then warned that if regional officials would not implement a referendum, they would assume control of the regional government via a "people's mandate", and remove from office all the elected regional councilors and members of parliament. When this warning was not heeded, the activists met in the RSA building and held a private vote. As it turned out, they voted in favor of independence from Ukraine and announced the formation of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) on April 7th, 2014.

On April 12th, pro-Russian militants successfully took control of the Donetsk city office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and two other police offices. They attempted to gain control of the general prosecutor's office and other police offices, but were resisted. Nonetheless, they continued efforts towards seizing control over vital strategic infrastructure throughout Donetsk Oblast, demanding that public officials swear allegiance to the new Republic. By April 14th, the pro-Russian separatists led by Igor Girkin and Igor Bezler had

seized a number of government buildings in other cities within the oblast, such as Sloviansk, Mariupol, Horlivka, Kramatorsk, Yenakiiyeve, Makiivka, Druzhkivka, and Zhdanivka. In Sloviansk, located in northern Donetsk Oblast, pro-Russian separatists under Igor Girkin's command, laid siege to administration buildings, police offices, and the SBU building. They removed as mayor, Nelya Shtepa, and replaced her with Vyacheslav Ponomarev. The militants also accessed and seized police weapons and firearms, which prompted the Ukrainian government to launch a counter-terrorism offensive. The led to a standoff between the pro-Russian separatists and the Ukrainian armed forces and marked the beginning of armed conflict between the two. The pro-Russian separatists led by Girkin would execute 4 Ukrainian citizens during their operations in Sloviansk.

In Kramatorsk, which is also located in northern Donetsk Oblast, pro-Russian separatists after a shootout, took control of a police station on April 13th and raised the flag of the Donetsk People's Republic. They gave city officials until that following Monday to swear allegiance to the Republic, warning that if they did not comply, they would remove them from office. The Ukrainian government, however, intervened and recaptured the city from the separatists, before withdrawing, which subsequently led to separatists reclaiming it. Off and on fighting continued until July, when the separatists withdrew their personnel from Kramatorsk.

The separatists would gain control of city administration buildings and police offices in a number of other cities in Donetsk Oblast as well. At Artemivsk, they were able to access an arms depot which contained 30 tanks.

Pro-Russian militants tried to take over police headquarters in Horlivka on April 12th, but were resisted by police forces. The purpose of the siege was to acquire firearms and weapons stored at the station. Some policemen would join the separatists, giving them enough manpower to take control of the police headquarters 2 days later. The police chief was beaten and Horlivka city council deputy, Volodymyr Rybak, was kidnapped. His body was later found in a river with signs of torture. The city administration building was taken on April 30th. This confirmed separatist control of the city.

The separatists occupied the city administration building in Mariupol on April 13th. The Ukrainian government, however, later reclaimed it. Clashes between Ukrainian forces and pro-Russian separatists would escalate by May when the Ukrainian National Guard occupied Mariupol. Not before long, the separatists recaptured it and advanced onto a local police station. Ukraine would respond by deploying the military, but, were unsuccessful in pushing out the separatists, as clashes lead to a fire at the city administration building where separatists declared their Donetsk People's Republic(DPR) headquarters. On May 16th, a combined force of steelworkers, local

police and Ukraine security forces reclaimed control over a number of government buildings and the much of the city. As the Ukrainian National Guard came in to provide support, the headquarters of the DPR was reclaimed and Mariupol was declared the provisional capital of Donetsk Oblast, replacing Donetsk city, which was then still under the occupation of separatists forces.

Those captured who were part of the Ukrainian army were held prisoner, while anyone fighting on behalf of a volunteer army were shot on the spot. Igor Girkin and Igor Bezler have been accused by the Ukrainian government of orchestrating the murder of Volodymyr Ivanovych Rybak, a Horlivka politician.

After the seizure of the Donetsk RSA, the pro-Russian militants began to expand their occupation. They took control of the municipal administration building on April 16th, 2014. They would later seize the regional state television network in April and began broadcasting to Russian television channels. On May 4th, they raised a flag of the Donetsk People's Republic. In response, the Ukrainian president, Oleksandr Turchynov, launched a counter-terrorism offensive against the Russia-backed separatists in Donetsk Oblast. Optimistic, the minister of Internal Affairs, Arsen Avakov, believed that unrest and violence would be quelled quickly either by force or negotiations. President Oleksandr Turchynov then issued a decree ordering the seizure of the Donetsk RSA building. He also offered amnesty to any armed separatists who would surrender their arms.

Inspired by the actions of pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk, pro-Russian groups in Luhansk Oblast would follow suit. On April 6th, 1,000 pro-Russian activists took control of the SBU building in the city of Luhansk and then demanded the release of separatists currently jailed by the Ukrainian government. After police intervened and regained control of the building, the protesters would regather outside the building and announce the formation of a 'people's government' that would be incorporated into the Russian Federation. At this gathering, they chose Valery Bolotov as their "People's Governor". The Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) was then declared on April 27th. Representatives demanded that the Ukrainian government provide amnesty for protesters and acknowledge Russian as the official language there. They also demanded that the Ukrainian government hold a referendum on the status of the region. They warned Ukraine that if those demands were not met by April 29, 2014, they would take the same militant course of action as the pro-Russian militants that formed the Donetsk People's Republic. Subsequently, the demands were not met and on April 29th, Luhansk People's Republic insurgents took control of the city administration building in Pervomaisk and proceeded to raise their flag above it. The pro-Russian separatists would also gain control of the city administration building in Alchevsk. While in Krasnyi Luch, the separatists

successfully persuaded the city administration to comply with their demands for referendums on the status of Donetsk and Luhansk. They too would later raise the Russian flag over the city administration building. The city administration building in Stakhanov was captured by separatists on May 1st, followed by the police station, commerce centre, and SBU building. On May 5th, pro-Russian separatists seized police buildings in Rovenky and Sloviansk. The prosecutor's office in Sievierodonetsk would be taken by separatists on May 7th. On May 8th, pro-Russian separatists took control of government buildings in Starobilsk.

What began as protests in the Donbas region had ignited into armed conflict between the pro-Russian separatists and the Ukrainian government. The pro-Russian separatist forces declared Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics—DPR and LPR respectively. Here, we see the residual effects that centuries of Russification had on Ukraine's ability to maintain a stable and prevailing statehood.

In May of 2014, fighting in the Donbas region continued to escalate. In that same month, Ukraine elected a new president, Petro Poroshenko. Meanwhile, Russia employed several tactics to destabilize the Donbas region. These included disinformation and the use of irregular fighters—Russian fighters without insignia. On May 12th, 2014, Igor Girkin declared himself "Supreme Commander" of the Donetsk People's Republic and issued a decree that all military personnel in the region swear an oath of loyalty to him within 48 hours. He also warned that any Ukrainian military personnel still present in the region would be executed on sight. He then invited the Russian Federation to employ military support in case of NATO intervention. Pavel Gubarev, president of Donetsk People's Republic, declared martial law on May 15th, and gave Ukrainian military until 9pm that day to withdraw from Donetsk. Valery Bolotov, president of the Luhansk People's Republic, did the same on May 22nd. At this point, separatists would begin launching attacks against Ukrainian military personnel remaining in the region. At an army checkpoint in the city of Volnovakha, separatists ambushed Ukrainian soldiers, killing 18. On the same day, a convoy of 100 Ukrainian soldiers on the move in Rubizhne, Luhansk Oblast, attempting to advance into pro-Russian separatists territory, were ambushed by 500 separatist fighters. The fighting would last through most of the day. Over a dozen of the fighters on both sides were killed in during the clash. However, the separatists were able to capture a few armored vehicles. The Internal Affairs Ministry stated that some of the Pro-Russian fighters had attempted to enter Luhansk Oblast from Russia, before being deterred by border security. On May 22nd, the Donetsk and Luhansk republics agreed to consolidate into what was called the confederative state of New Russia, and stated their intention to incorporate southern and eastern Ukraine into the new

confederation. They also established Russian Orthodoxy as the state religion. Volunteer pro-government militia, the Donbas Battalion, attempted to advance on separatist territory on May 23rd, but were ambushed by 200 pro-Russian separatists.

Continuing their fight against pro-Ukrainian forces in the Donbas region, pro-Russian insurgents, on May 26th, took control of the main terminal of the Donetsk International Airport, demanding that government forces withdraw from the Donbas region. The Ukrainian government responded with airstrikes on their positions, killing 40 pro-Russian separatists. Another round of airstrikes by Ukrainian forces were fired on an RSA building in Luhansk city on June 2nd, killing and wounding both separatist fighters and civilians. Fighting would escalate considerably in June as Russian tanks were seen crossing the Russo-Ukrainian border into Donetsk. The convoy of tanks and armored vehicles were said to be transporting rocket launchers to the pro-Russian fighters. The Ukrainian government had already declared that it regained control of the southern and western parts of Donetsk Oblast and the northern part of Luhansk Oblast. They would declare a ceasefire at the end of June.

In July, fighting would escalate in the eastern areas of Donetsk. Rostov Oblast was shelled intensely by the Ukrainian forces. After it was reported that a civilian was killed, Russia threatened to retaliate with airstrikes against Ukrainian military targets in the region. Ukrainian forces then proceeded to advance on the separatist strongholds in Luhansk. On July 15th, an airstrike in Snizhne left 11 people dead and destroyed multiple residences. More fighting ensued at a Ukrainian government checkpoint near the Russian border in the village, Marynivka. Much of the infrastructure there was destroyed as pro-Russian separatist shelled the area with a combination of tanks, anti-tank missiles and rocket fire. The Ukrainian guards, however, were able to drive the separatist back to Stepanivka. In the village of Tarany, 11 Ukrainian soldiers were killed by pro-Russian separatists. On July 17th, a Malaysian civilian passenger jet, MH-17, was shot down over Hrabove, killing all 298 aboard. An investigation concluded that the crash was caused by a Buk surface to air missile fired by pro-Russian fighters. According to reports, the Buk originated from Russia and was transported to a separatist controlled area on the day of the MH17 crash. It was then immediately sent back to Russia following the crash. Luhansk was shelled significantly during the conflict as a result of the fighting between Ukrainian forces and pro-Russian fighters. 20 civilians were killed during the clashes. At the same time, fighting continued to escalate in the northwestern districts of Kyivskiy and Kuibyshevskiy, and much of the area's water supply was cut off.

Government forces would reclaim Dzerzhynsk, Soledar, and Rubizhne. As the pro-Russian separatist became stretched thin amid

heavy losses, the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) prime minister Alexander Borodai looked to establish a ceasefire agreement with the Ukrainian forces. The DPR commander Igor Girkin requested for Russia to intervene in the conflict. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian forces continued their advance. They reclaimed Sievierodonetsk and later on July 23rd, broke through the separatist blockade established near Donetsk airport. After this, they advanced toward the northwestern corner of Donetsk city. Many pro-Russian separatists began to withdraw from the surrounding areas, but yet did, however, manage to shoot down two Ukrainian Su-25 fighter jets near Dmytrivka. In Horlivka, Ukrainian forces continued launching air strikes on separatist positions. Notwithstanding, the border with Russia was yet to be stabilized and weapons from Russia were still accessible. This was because the Izvaryne border crossing was still under the control of pro-Russian fighters.

Shelling would ensue again in multiple districts of Donetsk city. In Horlivka, continued shelling resulted in the deaths of 30 civilians. Shelling would continue in the Leninskyi and Kyivskyi districts of Donetsk city. Defeats suffered by the DPR compelled Igor Girkin to implore Russia for reinforcements. He argued that the defeat of the DPR would reflect badly on the Russian Federation, since it was president Vladimir Putin that named the republic "New Russia." In the meantime, Luhansk was completely surrounded by Ukrainian government forces, with both water supply and electricity nearly cut off completely. The mayor announced that the city was on the verge of a humanitarian crisis as a result of unending rocket fire. Donetsk, on the other hand, was marred with continued fighting and relentless shelling between both sides of the conflict, and supply lines between Luhansk and Donetsk had been cut off. The shelling continued in Donetsk through the first 14 days of August, as the Ukrainian government forces continued their advance forward. Igor Girkin would resign from his post and be replaced by Vladimir Kononov. The hybrid warfare that Russia initially pursued against Ukraine was now converted into a more conventional form. Before, Russia was providing reinforcements to the pro-Russian separatists with irregular fighters, but by August 14, Russia would launch a more standard military invasion of the Donbas region. Highly secretive, Russian officials nonetheless continued to remain vague about its operations there, not presenting a clear cut answer on the matter, as NATO and the United States army would provide assessments and report Russia's incursion. Russia has been able to disguise many of its troops as pro-Russian separatists, which leaves some doubt on the actual scale of Russian intervention. Armored personnel carriers with Russian military plates would cross into Donetsk via the Izvaryne border crossing, which was still controlled by pro-Russian fighters. DPR prime minister Alexander Zakharchenko reported that his forces

contained around 1200 Russian military-trained combatants. However, in just a few days, Ukrainian forces would claim more territory in Luhansk and Donetsk, as increased shelling would claim more civilian lives. After the Ukrainian government reached out to the separatist for the sake of establishing a ceasefire, the DPR prime minister, emboldened by Russian reinforcements, demanded that Ukraine recognize their autonomy first.

With Russia's backing, counter-offensives launched by the pro-Russian separatists would stifle Ukrainian advances in Luhansk and Donetsk. The separatists targeted Ukrainian government positions in Shchastia, which is situated right along the Siverskyi Donets River in Luhansk. When Russian reinforcements arrived, the separatists were able to surround Ukrainian government forces positioned in Ilovaisk and Amvrosiivka in Donetsk Oblast, and the heavy shelling caused the Ukrainian government forces and other volunteer battalions to retreat, leaving the pro-government volunteer Donbas Battalion trapped in Ilovaisk against the separatists. Many of the Ukrainian volunteer battalions are funded by Ukrainian oligarchs, and were vital in keeping the separatists from over-powering Ukrainian government forces in Donbas. There is fear that privately funded militias which gained control over areas in eastern and southern Ukraine may not return those territories back to the Ukrainian government. The oligarchs could simply use their control over the territories to exert considerable leverage and influence on Ukrainian government policy.

As separatist forces vowed to fight their way to the Azov Sea, reinforcement Russian fighters would aid the separatists in launching an artillery barrage on the coastal city of Novoazovsk, in southern Donetsk Oblast. Prior to this, much of southern Donetsk had already been reclaimed by Ukrainian government forces. But now the separatist were able to use the village of Markyne to shell Novoazovsk. Ukrainian forces, however, were able to detain irregular Russian paratroopers in a nearby village. But Russia claimed that the paratroopers ended up there due to a botched military exercise. As Russia continued to deny the presence of Russian fighters in Donbas region, the pro-Russian separatists advanced into Novoazovsk with a convoy of 100 armored vehicles, tanks, and Grad rocket lorries, all believed to be comprised of Russian personnel trailing not too far behind. Ukrainian forces in Novoazovsk were thus forced to retreat and spare their resources for defense of Mariupol. This new stealth invasion by the Russian Federation would change the dynamic of the conflict. Meanwhile, the Donbas battalion trapped in Ilovaisk would negotiate a withdrawal agreement with the separatists. However, the separatist would fire upon them as they vacated, killing several dozen. Now under assault from Russian artillery, Ukrainian government forces would withdraw from Luhansk International airport—a day

after a Ukrainian patrol boat was attacked by on-shore artillery. The Ukrainian forces would nearly lose Mariupol to the Russia-backed separatists. But a combination of fighters from the Azov Battalion and Ukrainian government forces were able to repel the Russia-backed separatists from taking control of Mariupol.

The Azov Battalion has drawn considerable controversy, despite being the major component in aiding Mariupol's defense against the pro-Russian separatists. They initially formed as a volunteer Ukrainian nationalist militia in May of 2014, but were eventually incorporated into the National Guard of Ukraine in September of 2014. While the Azov Battalion has garnered a reputation for being highly tactical and precise in their military operations, they have also been accused of engaging in looting and other tactics such as torture. Other allegations include having ties to neo-Nazis. A representative of the battalion stated that roughly 10% of their fighters were affiliated with Neo-Nazi groups. Ironically, over half in the Azov Battalion are Russian-speaking and many others travel from abroad to join their ranks. Azov was established as a special volunteer police unit regulated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It was not initially established as a Neo-Nazi group, however, some of the members who later joined had Neo-Nazi ties and would appropriate symbols that resembled the ones used by the Nazis. The Azov Battalion's commander, Andriy Biletsky, had previously led the Social National Assembly and Patriot of Ukraine, which does share a similar outlook of the National Socialism installed in Germany circa 1933, where the dominant race and culture would have priority over other ethnic groups within a particular region. With this in mind, it must be said that, for Ukraine, there is a historical backdrop that has to be understood when it comes to assessing the adoption of Nazi symbolism by a pro-Ukrainian militia group. And which should contrast it from neo-Nazism in countries where groups would appropriate Nazi symbols, not just for antisemitic purposes, but mostly for its shock value. Back in World War II, many Ukrainians looked to Nazi Germany as liberators of their country against a Soviet regime that had already by then tortured and orchestrated the deaths of millions of them during the Holodomor. While the Nazis after advancing into Ukraine, nonetheless, instituted repressive measures there, they also fought alongside the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) against a later Soviet counter-invasion. This plays a large role in some segments of Ukrainian nationalism's outlook towards Nazi Germany. In Galacia, where even today the majority of Ukrainian nationalists gather, the Nazis allowed Ukrainians there to retain much of their cultural and civic practices. This was without question a respite for them, considering Stalin's vicious policies against Ukraine in the 1930s. Moreover, by the time World War II began, Karl Marx had already become to many Ukrainians, what Hitler was to Jewish

people, an instigator of their near complete demise. And the fact that there are still many symbols of the brutal Soviet era circulating the eastern parts of Ukraine does not help in terms of allowing Ukrainians to move forward amid having to remember those past atrocities carried out against them by the Soviet regime. Hitler's atrocity against the Jews had a more distant alienating connotation. While Stalin's atrocity against Ukrainians had a more domestic connotation. Both, nonetheless, targeted and had a devastating impact on a specific group of people. When the Azov Battalion enjoined with the Ukrainian National Guard, they moved to depoliticize themselves. However, a mass shooting at a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand by a white nationalist linked to a member of the Azov Battalion would lead the US to push for legislation that would have the Azov Battalion labeled a foreign terrorist organization. At the moment, NATO, has refused to conduct military drills with the unit. Despite the antisemitic connotation of Azov's platform, Azov Battalion has some Jewish supporters and some Jewish members serving in the battalion. Azov leader Biletsky has since been elected into the Ukrainian parliament and left the group in 2016.

After a summer of intense fighting, Russia, Ukraine and the pro-Russian separatists agreed to a ceasefire in September of 2014, as a line was established between the pro-Russian insurgent side and the Ukrainian government side. The ceasefire was called the Minsk Protocol and was violated on numerous occasions in the ensuing years. In October later that year, DPR and LPR authorities violated the Minsk Protocol by holding parliamentary elections. Fighting would subsequently escalate, and heavy shelling and casualties occurred in the Donbas region. Also, more Russian troops and heavy artillery could be seen crossing over from Russia into separatist held territory in Ukraine. Between September and December of 2014, 1000 people were reported to have died in Donbas as a result of the violence. President Poroshenko of Ukraine encouraged for a new peace deal to be established, as both Ukrainian forces and separatist forces agreed to stop the fighting on December 9th and resume efforts in adhering to the tenets of the Minsk Protocol, such as prisoner swaps. However, in January 2015, the ceasefire was broken again and fighting would once again escalate. After brief disagreements amongst separatist fighters, violence ensued on Ukrainian government-controlled Donetsk International airport, which was bombarded by separatist artillery and taken on January 15th . Russian reinforcements began gathering momentum for the separatists. Keep in mind the Minsk Protocol established a bufferzone between Ukrainian government controlled territory and separatist controlled territory. So this attack on the airport would be a massive breach of contract orchestrated by the separatists, and they even

refused to attend a new round of ceasefire talks. Subsequently, Ukraine government forces proceeded to reclaim the Donetsk International airport on January 17th, 2015, but the fighting would then spread to other areas of Donetsk, as Ukrainian defense of the airport compelled the Russian Federation to deploy even more artillery, soldier and tank reinforcement to the Donbas region. These reinforcements allowed the separatists to reclaim the airport from the Ukrainian forces. Following the victory, the separatist fighters advanced to the line of control, firing upon Ukrainian soldiers positioned there, and capturing a number of checkpoints. They also launched a barrage of artillery fire upon Mariupol and Debaltseve. The heavy fighting and casualties would lead France and Germany to get involved in the peace process. As the United States proposed sending in US military to aid Ukraine against the pro-Russian advance, Angela Merkel, then chancellor of Germany, believed that would only make matters worse. The Franco-German plan was then drawn up as a last chance to end the conflict. However, by February 15th, the Minsk II protocol was established. But separatists would continue fighting in Debaltseve, capturing it on February 18th, 2015. Minor skirmishes would break-out throughout the year, but the main tenets of the protocol would manage to be observed, as Ukrainian and separatist forces began withdrawing heavy artillery. The skirmishes and ceasefire violations that did break-out during this time were almost entirely perpetrated by Russia-backed separatists. After peace demonstration took place in separatist held territory, both sides of the conflict finally agreed to drastically cut back on the violence in September of 2015. With minor outbreaks of violence here and there, the situation in Donbas would remain stable throughout 2016.

In Crimea, Russia accused the Ukrainians of orchestrating terrorism in 2016. As a response, Russia increased its military presence. Ukraine then began to fear that Russia was planning a fullscale invasion of country. By 2017, fighting would once again escalate in the Donbas region. In February of that year, Russian president Vladimir Putin issued a decree stating that Russia was going to recognize personal and vehicle registration documents issued by the DPR and LPR. This meant that Russia would recognize those living in the DPR and LPR as citizens of an actual country. However, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated that Russia still recognizes the Donbas territory as part of Ukraine. Prior to this, those who fled to Russia from Donbas would have trouble presenting their DPR and LRP issued documents as valid. So in light of this, many considered the decree by Putin to be a humanitarian one. A renewed ceasefire was nonetheless established in February. However, Ukrainian forces reported that separatists were still violating the protocol and perpetrating minor attacks on Ukrainian government fighters. Ceasefires established in June, August and December would

all be violated by the pro-Russian separatists who were employing snipers, drones, and frag grenades against the Ukrainian government forces. This led to Ukraine issuing a bill in January of 2018 that called for the Ukrainian government to reclaim territories held by the separatists. Russia considered this an attempt to start another war and a violation of the Minsk protocol. The new bill declared the DPR and LPR as occupied territories with Russia as an aggressor. The bill gave president Poroshenko the right to use military force without the approval of the Ukrainian parliament.

In 2018, ceasefires established in March, July, and August were mostly violated by Russia-backed separatists. That same year, on August 31st, DPR leader Alexander Zakharchenko was killed in a restaurant explosion. In March of 2019, another ceasefire was violated. While fighting did reduce considerably since 2014 and 2015, the Russia-backed separatists would continuously violate ceasefire agreements by employing sniper fire and drone attacks on Ukrainian government positions.

In May of 2019, Volodymyr Zelensky was elected president of Ukraine, and by October of that year, extensive negotiations had been carried out between Russia, the Russian-backed separatists, the Ukrainian government, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe(OSCE). The Steinmeier-Formula was established. It was named after the Germany's president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. The agreement would allow the DPR and LPR to hold elections. Those areas would also be given a "special status" during efforts to reintegrate them into Ukraine. Both sides agreed and began withdrawing troops from the Donbas region, both later that month and again in November. The withdrawals were followed by a successful prisoner swap. In December, Russian president Vladimir Putin, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky, French president Emmanuel Macron and German chancellor Angela Merkel met in Paris to resume the Normandy format negotiations. Both sides agreed to exchange the remaining prisoners being held.

The global COVID-19 pandemic, which was the global spread of a deadly coronavirus strain which started in Wuhan, China. The virus began to spread to the rest of the world starting around January 15th of 2020, and affected the ongoing situation in Donbas. There, attempts to prevent the spread of the virus had cut off civilian access to various supplies since the both Ukraine and the DPR & LPR established lock-down procedures for their respective territories, cutting off passage through the line of contact. In March of 2020, fighting would escalate, leading to 18 civilian deaths in the Donbas region. In July, another ceasefire was established, which significantly decreased the violence. Between July and November, only 3 Ukrainian soldiers had been killed. At the beginning of 2021, fighting once again escalated. In 2021, in the first 3 months alone, 25

Ukrainian government fighters were killed. Between January and October of that year, 85 soldiers and 30 civilians would lose their lives as a result of military conflict. 2021 would also see a large build up of Russian military personnel in annexed Crimea and along the Ukraine-Russian border. By April, 85,000 Russian troops were already in Crimea and running military drills near the borders of the Donbas conflict zone. Both NATO and the United States warned that Russia was planning a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. France, Germany, and the OSCE all reached out to Russia to engage in more peace talks, but Russia would decline to participate. Meanwhile, Ukraine rolled out new drone technology, a Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2, which Ukraine would use to destroy artillery being fired by separatist forces.

A poll of Ukrainian public opinion of Russian intervention taken by the International Republican Institute in September of 2014 showed that both a majority of Russian-speaking and Ukrainianspeaking citizens disapproved of Russian intervention in Ukraine. A later poll by the International Republican Institute showed that 80% of Ukrainians nationwide believed that the separatist held territories should remain a part of Ukraine. 73% living in separatist controlled areas also believed that those territories should remain a part of Ukraine.

In recent years following Russia's annexation of Crimea, there has been increasing support for Ukraine to join NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Ukraine had applied for membership back in 2008, however, between then and 2013, public support for Ukraine to join was low.

Since the annexation of Crimea, Russia laid claim to both sides of the Kerch Strait, which connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Azov. It separates the Kerch Peninsula of Crimea from the Taman Peninsula of Russia's Krasnodar Krai. Russia and Ukraine had an agreement going back to 2003, which allowed both countries to use the strait. Ukraine has a port in the Sea of Azov called Mariupol. However in 2018 as Ukrainian vessels were enroute to the port, Russia blocked Ukraine's access to the strait and then proceeded to fire upon the Ukrainian vessels as they were turning back towards Ukraine. Russia seized the ships and detained the crew members.

Between 2014 and 2018, 10,000 people have been killed by pro-Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine. Many point to the Orange Revolution as the trigger of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Nevertheless, the impetus of Russian policy change from a respect of Ukraine independence in 2000, to a hostile view of Ukraine's sovereignty may have a genesis in the way the United States and NATO applied mid-east foreign policy between 2003 and 2014 and how that application was perceived by the Russian state and its president Vladimir Putin.

Vladimir Putin was born in Leningrad and studied law at

Leningrad State University. From there, he went on to work as a KGB officer for 16 years, reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before resigning in 1991. He then decided to go into politics and in 1996 joined the administration of Boris Yeltsin, where he would serve as the director of the FSB(formerly KGB) and secretary of Russia's Security Council. In 1999, he was appointed Prime Minister. After Boris Yeltsin resigned, Putin became acting President of Russia. He was officially elected later in 1999 and again in 2004. During this time, the office of President in Russia was limited to 2 consecutive terms. So in 2008, after his last term ended, Putin chose to become prime minster from 2008- 2012. Putin was then re-elected president of Russia in 2012 and again in 2018. In retrospect, we can observe a considerable change in Putin's outlook between the time of his first 8 years as president of Russia(1999-2008), and the time of his next 8 years as president(2012 -present). During Putin's first 8 years, he put forth a western friendly foreign policy agenda, even flirting with the idea of Russia joining NATO, which would have made Russia a military ally with the United States. Putin also signed on to a strategic partnership with the EU in 2000, stating Russia's intention to recognize the sovereign rights of Ukraine. However, the United States's and NATO's illegal war against Iraq in 2003, and its aggressive and unfettered military interventions in Libya and Syria in 2011 alarmed the Russian state in what Russia felt was an audacious foreign policy where the United States was attempting to position itself as an international police force. There was also a double standard that Putin felt the United States was applying by justifying their role in destabilizing Libya and Syria, asserting regime change, militarily aiding government opposition, and yet pointing out the moral implications of other countries looking to assert their own regional interests. This only served to confirm Moscow's suspicions of NATO. Russia believed that after the Cold War, NATO had no purpose since its initial establishment was not only for the sake of constraining German and Japan militarily, but also deterring any expansionist ambition of the Soviet Union after World War II. After NATO incorporated West Germany into the alliance, the Soviet Union, likewise, established the Warsaw pact with other eastern European countries in order to deter NATO expansion. But after the Soviet Union ended, the Soviets relinquished control over the alliance and effectively dissolved the Warsaw pact. In doing this, Russia was promised security guarantees from NATO, and Putin often states that NATO has never fulfilled these promises and that NATO only continues to exist as a provocational entity, conducting aggressive military exercises near Russia's borders on a regular basis. All these factors, along with the fact that Ukraine has been entertaining the possibility of a military alliance with the United States, played a significant role in Russia's assertive policy against Ukraine in 2014

with the annexation of Crimea. Any deescalation efforts to the RussoUkrainian conflict will certainly have to address the issue of US/NATO foreign policy and the residual effects it has had on the foreign policy of other nations.

Crimea, historically, was the home of the Crimean Tatars, whose ethnic backdrop is comprised of a number of different races that inhabited the area throughout history. These include Tauri, Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, Greeks, Goths, Bulgars, Khazars, Pechenegs, Italians and Circassians. However, the consolidating ethnic group that fomented the establishment of Tatar people were the Cumans, a Turkic peoples. In the 9th century, Crimea was contested between Byzantium, Rus', and Khazaria. In the 10th century, the Rus' had taken Crimea from the Byzantines. Crimea is also the place where Vladimir the Great was baptized Christian, marking the beginning of Kievan Rus's acceptance of Christianity. In the 13th century, Crimea had become part of the Mongol empire. During this time, the Crimean Tatars accepted Islam and Crimea would become a central area for Islam in eastern Europe. Later under Mongolian rule, the Tatars would make an attempt at independence from the Golden Horde(Mongols). This struggle was led by Haci Giray, the founder of the Crimean Khanate. After gaining independence from the Great Horde, the Crimean Khanate would become a vassal state(protectorate) of the Ottomans from 1449 to 1783. In 1774, under the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, the Crimean Khanate claimed its independence from the Ottomans. In 1783, Crimea was conquered by the Russians, and thereafter, many Crimean Tatars were forcibly exiled to the Ottoman Empire. Crimea would become incorporated into the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik uprising in 1917. Between 1917 and 1933, 150,000 Tatars(roughly half of their population) were either killed by famine as a result of Stalin's collectivization policies, executed, or deported from Crimea. In 1941, during World War II, Crimea was occupied by German and Romanian armed forces. After the Soviets expelled the Germans during a counteroffensive, many Crimean Tatars were accused of corroborating with the Nazis. And in 1944, the entire Crimean Tatar population was deported to central Asia, with most of them sent to Uzbekistan. In 1954, the Soviet Union transferred Crimea to Ukraine. It would not be until 1989, under Mikhail Gorbachev, that the Soviet state would attempt to make amends for the unjustified expulsion of Crimean Tatars from their native land. The legal and police restrictions were lifted and the Tatars would be allowed to return to Crimea. However, over the course of time, much of their land had already become inhabited by Ukrainian and Russian settlers. This became a source of acrimony, as Crimean Tatars were left having to occupy crude dwellings. 250,000 of them now live in Crimea, while 150,000 remain in Uzbekistan and elsewhere. Nationalism amongst the Crimean Tatars in response to

what they feel are attacks on their rightful settlement in their native land could forewarn of future issues in Crimea. There have already been instances of mass violence as a result of Tatar demonstrations. In October 1992, the police tore down what was considered an “illegally built” Tatar settlement established in the town of Alushta. This was followed by unrest, as Crimean protesters marched into the Crimean Parliament and demanded the release of Tatars detained during the protest. In 1995, unrest followed when extortion of Tatar business owners by Russian gangsters and the murder of Tatar traders provoked Tatar attacks on shops believed to be Russian-owned or mafia-controlled. This ended in the shooting of two Tatars. Because the Tatars have a historical claim on Crimea, instituting policies that would keep Tatar grievances minimized may prove very difficult. To understand the Russian-speaking segments of Ukraine is to first understand that Ukraine is very regionalized in terms of sentiment. Most people who live in Ukraine are more identified with their local constituency, over their national republic. Prior to the unrest following the Orange Revolution in 2004, no one could know for certain where the country was headed. However, the cultural variability amongst different localities could provide a hint as to why it would be difficult to unite Ukraine on economic reforms. During Soviet rule, both Ukrainians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians were encouraged to adhere to both their local administrative apparatus and the Soviet Union as a whole, and at the same time disregard the nationalistic framework that overlays the territory of Ukraine. This outlook has largely continued even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as both Ukrainian and Russian-speaking Ukrainians remain more privy to being insulated by local matters over national matters. For the Donbas region, which is majority Russian-speaking, the populace there during the Soviet era had become adapted to the economic and political power being centered in Moscow. When the Soviet Union ended, there was a difficult readjustment in going forward without a central element in the picture. So, many in the Donbas became identified with their local or regional identity, as opposed to their national identity. Being from Donbas had become more important than being Russian and Ukrainian. This local outlook was also the same for Ukrainians in western Ukraine. Since independence, there had not been a political party that stood to represent a political or linguistic ideal to be implemented for the entirety of Ukraine, and much of Ukraine’s most extreme nationalistic elements are concentrated in the area of Galacia, which is a region divided between western Ukraine and eastern Poland. In Galacia, it is claimed that the purest form of the Ukrainian language is spoken. However, many consider it a heavily polonized version. There is a similar outlook toward the language spoken in Donetsk, a place where much of the Russian nationalist element is concentrated,

which maintains that the language spoken there is a mix of Ukrainian and Russian. Moreover, the main hope for the continued survival of Ukraine, should the current Donbas conflict come to an end, is based in the fact that the most extreme forms of nationalism, whether Ukrainian or Russian, are largely concentrated in areas that are geographically distant from each other. Had these elements been geographically contiguous, the current Ukraine crisis would have likely panned out much worse. Thankfully, the geographical space in between those areas of extremism, lies a much less ethnically inclined view of Ukrainian nationalism and a much friendlier outlook towards Russian-speaking Ukrainians. This indicates why in their respective presidential election wins, neither pro-Ukrainian Kravchuk or pro-Russian Kuchma received a majority of the vote in the majority Ukrainian central regions of Ukraine. However, there is always a fear in many areas of the Donbas region that some form of Ukrainization policy is waiting around the corner. And that the prevailing Russian-language spoken in those areas would be oppressed as a result. In Ukraine, the general consensus is that there is a thin line between Ukrainian nationalism and oppression of Russian culture. While from the vantage of point of a Ukrainian nationalist, there is a thin line between a special status for the Russian language and federalism. Furthermore, the history of Russia and Ukraine, irrespective of any attempts by Ukrainians to make Russian-speakers feel accommodated, plays a large role in alienating Russian-speakers from national Ukraine. This is indicative of the fact that independence day for Ukraine does not resonate among many Russian speakers, since they feel that it is not their holiday. Public celebrations of it are oftentimes protested by Russian nationalist groups. But this does not discount the fact that many in Ukraine are tied to both sides, being ethnically mixed with Ukrainian and Russian, which at times pits them against Ukrainian and Russian extremism, both of which they consider to be detrimental to the stability of life in Ukraine. Alexei Nestnov of the BBC Ukrainian Service said of the lack of nationalist culture in the Kharkiv area in Eastern Ukraine in 1995:

On the whole, people here wouldn't want to make a clear choice between Ukraine and Russia, if this could be avoided. And they themselves don't distinguish clearly between what is Ukrainian and what is Russian. If you enter a house here, you can't say whether it is a Ukrainian or a Russian home—in any case, families are often mixed. If it is a Ukrainian intellectual family, there might be a collection of Ukrainian literature, but this would be rare. Houses are decorated in a different way, depending on whether they are Ukrainian or Russian. If there are some traditional" Ukrainian decorations, then they may just as well be hung up by local Russians. In the villages, of course, it is different. There, people have

kept more genuine traditions, songs, ornaments, and so on. But they don't really think of them as national traditions, but as local ones—it is the tuteshni feeling, not nationalism.....On the whole, people here always liked the image of Russia that they received from Russian television, Russian culture, and so on. But since October 1993, and still more since Chechnya, there has been a change. People here are very peaceable, they hate the idea of war and political violence. So whereas people here—including Ukrainians—used to call themselves Russians, now this is not so popular. But people here still don't call themselves Ukrainians, so you could say they don't know what to call themselves.

Much of the tension that arises when it comes to language is manifested at the teaching and intellectual subset. Many in the Donetsk region are afraid that if Ukrainian policies are given a stronger foothold over Ukraine's policy-making, then many of the Russian-speaking schools there will eventually be replaced by Ukrainian speaking ones. While some in eastern Ukraine support a moderate Ukrainization, the crudeness among Ukrainian nationalists on topics of Russian language restriction is oftentimes itself the culprit that gives rise to reactiveness amongst Russian-speaking Ukrainians. Language implementations also have a tendency to coincide with historical revision, and the intention of an eventual Ukrainization has already changed much of how history is explained. In textbooks, former pro Russia-leaning perspectives of history have been converted into anti-Russia outlooks. This crudeness applied in handling the transition, along with the blatant revisionism will only continue to give rise to pro-Russian resistance to Ukrainization.

The Ukrainian language itself is not drastically different from Russian. This fact worked in favor of Russification policies during the Soviet era, and can aid the Ukrainization process of today. Another element that has entered into the picture is English. Ukrainianspeakers in Ukraine have worried about the provincialism element that comes with speaking Ukrainian and how this may hinder any student's or professional's desire to advance abroad, where having an understanding of English opens the door to more career opportunities.

When taking into consideration the history of Ukraine, it becomes difficult to relegate the longstanding struggle between Russians and Ukrainians as simply an ethnic struggle. This is because both Ukrainians and Russians are both of east Slavic origin. Furthermore, many geneticists have found that DNA-wise there is no discernible difference between an ethnic Russian and an ethnic Ukrainian. So the differences between them has to be restricted to the cultural level, mainly in regards to language and religion. But yet in light of this, Ukrainians are adamant that these differences connote

an ethnic distinction. However, Russians historically have believed that it does not. In an ethnic conflict, we would simply presume that one side of the conflict is drawn against the other due to genetic differences between the two, prioritized among other factors of course. But here as it pertains to Russians and Ukrainians, we have one side which believes that it is biologically distinct from the Russian and the other side that believes there is no biological distinction. In the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, things become more complicated because in Ukraine it involves Ukrainians against Ukrainians. There are Ukrainians who view themselves as ethnically distinct from Russians (these exist more in western and central Ukraine) and there are Ukrainians who view themselves as ethnically no different from Russians (these exist more in Eastern and Southern Ukraine). Thus the latter viewpoint fits into what would be the outlook of a pro-Russian separatist fighting against the Ukrainian government. In taking all of this into account and attempting to form a more technical standpoint, a Ukrainian as distinct from a Russian would have to be someone whose ancestral backdrop was always situated in the area of what comprises modern-day Ukraine. This is usually the main premise that is used to back claims of Ukrainian distinction. However, in Ukraine today, there is this amalgamation of east Slavic peoples who are descended from Russians that migrated from Russia during the time of the tsars, mixed in with east Slavic peoples that have been permanently settled in Ukraine since the time of Kievan Rus'. This layout makes it difficult to extract a true Ukrainian from a Ukrainian who descended from Russians that migrated to the area. This could be why "language" is becoming more singled out as the main marker of identity. Otherwise, in order to bring order out of this chaos of Russians and Ukrainians becoming so interwoven over time, Ukraine would need to conduct a census on the matter, gathering those Ukrainians whose ancestry shows a permanence of settlement in Ukraine. In gathering these and confirming such Ukrainians, Ukraine—at least this way—would always have a way to access the basic foundations of their history. This of course in the event that Ukrainian culture, language, and claims of distinction completely dissolve as it becomes fully absorbed into Russian culture.

In retrospect, Bohdan Khmelnytsky's fateful decision to place Ukraine under the protection of Muscovy in 1654 had historical implications that set Ukraine on a slow trajectory towards total assimilation into the Russian cultural and linguistic framework. This brings into question the legacy of Khmelnytsky. The Cossack rebellion that he orchestrated in the 1600s was largely in response to the Ukrainian Greek Catholicism that prevailed in Ukraine at that time. And the Cossacks on numerous occasions during the uprising attempted to abolish the Greek Catholic church. It is also likely that the Cossack's adherence to Eastern Orthodoxy played a large role in

Khmelnitsky's decision to place Ukraine under the protection of Tsarist Russia. While Bohdan's actions led to Ukraine becoming independent of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, his decision to place Ukraine under Russian protection had devastating consequences for the Uniate Church and Ukraine's future claims on independence and sovereignty. It set off centuries of religious suppression orchestrated by the Orthodox Church against the Ukrainian Greek Catholics. This along with the fact that Russia and Cossack commonality of Orthodoxy made it easy for Russian intellectual discourse to conflate the intentions of Khemlnitsky's decision to ally Ukraine with Russia under the Treaty of Pereyaslav in 1654.

Chapter 10: Anthony's Treaty

In order to bring peace to Ukraine and end the current RussoUkrainian conflict, efforts have to be taken to persuade the Ukrainian government to stop blocking the flow of water into Crimea. In exchange, Russia should agree to remove all Russian troops from the Donbas region. The pro-Russian fighters there should renounce claims on Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts and also be granted amnesty by the Ukrainian government. The Ukrainian government would also give the Russian language a temporary “special status” in the Donbas region, with an intention for the Ukrainian language to slowly phase out the Russian language during a process that would take 500 years to complete. Russia should also grant the separatist fighters refugee status and pension in the case that they would opt to leave Ukraine for Russia. Another aspect of this plan should involve Ukraine asserting neutrality and disembarking on plans to join NATO. The actions of NATO forces in the middle east during the first 2 decades of the 21st century has to be pointed out as one of the factors that led to heightened tensions between Ukraine and Russia. Also the fact that the NATO has in recent years militarily abandoned the vast majority of its allies during major conflicts should further deter Ukrainian pursuit of NATO membership and military alliance with the US. In being assured that Ukraine intends to remain neutral and independent, Russia should in response be expected to reduce aggression on its policy in Ukraine and remain open to agreements in which Russia would respect Ukrainian independence. The only stipulation which should be applied to this agreement is that Ukraine would avoid military alliance with the United States for a period of 40 years. If Ukraine chooses, they can pursue or maintain trade and economic agreements with the US. Ukraine can also establish military alliances with western European countries not currently hostile to Russia. In exchange for Ukraine taking these measures, Russia would agree that a referendum in Crimea be taken every 10 years, allowing the people there to decide which country it wants to be a part of, Ukraine or Russia. If a referendum votes in favor of Ukraine, Russia would agree to remove its military forces from the region. And vice versa, Ukraine would allow Russia to claim Crimea if a referendum votes in favor of Crimea joining Russia. This should be part of a 100 year plan, where the final referendum would decide finality on the matter. In turn, Ukraine would acknowledge the legitimacy of the referendum held in 2014 as neutrally legal in accordance with international law and also take responsibility for its role in cutting off the water supply to Crimea and thus compromising the stability of the entire region. If no amnesty is granted, the pro-Russian fighters will plead guilty to terrorism for using violent means to impose secession in areas where officials there did not consent to issue a referendum.

They will accept a max penalty of 10 year exile to Russia, where they would receive a pension from the Russian government. Russia would take responsibility for the violation of ceasefire agreements throughout the conflict. Because of the systemic dangers that arise with protests, such as providing a platform for violent separatists to justify terrorism, the Ukrainian government should temporarily increase taxes in Ukraine in order to help pay for damages caused by protesters. This should also deter in the future mass protests which endanger the stability of the entire region and the safety of the general populace. The UN should declare null and void any NATO sanctions against Russia which pertain to the Ukraine conflict, due to the role that NATO has played in attempting to provoke Russia with threats based on unverifiable evidence of any intention by Russia to invade all of Ukraine. Since 2016, there has been a steady, albeit slow move towards improved stabilization of Eastern Ukraine. NATO propaganda and threats against Russia only served to stifle the process of stabilization and peace.

On the home front, Ukraine should move to settle any tensions between Ukrainian and Russian speakers in Ukraine. Historically, government has attempted to unite people by enforcing edicts that would attempt to gather people under one religion or language. This tactic is largely ripe with flaws, due to the fact that forcing people into one form of cultural expression is a form of discrimination in itself. So resistance in response is to be expected. Imposing a dual language system, on the other hand, would provoke a large segment of Ukrainian nationals and should be avoided. However, schools should be given the authority to decide whether or not they want to offer Russian as a second language. And as proposed previously, this should coincide with a plan to phase out the Russian language in a process that would take 500 years to complete. Meaning, that if by the 499th year, Russian is still largely spoken in eastern and southern Ukraine, the Ukrainian political apparatus can institute a Ukrainian language mandate to completely end the use of Russian by the end of that 499th year or it can choose to extend the deadline through a voting process.

The key in stabilizing the domestic situation in Ukraine is not so much by promoting harmony, but predictability. Everyone in Ukraine should have some confidence that they will have some ability to forecast the trajectory of where their chosen path in life will take them and what the political climate may be like over that time-frame. Ukraine should also promote and cultivate, through media, successful private business owners, whether Russian speaking or Ukrainian speaking, since both will have a large effect on advocating for domestic stability in Ukraine. They also provide inspiration for others looking to attain similar economic goals. Both sides, majority and minority, must have firm agreement that violent separatism needs to

be kept in check. The general public must also be aware that assembling against their local government in the future might allow violent separatists to high-jack their purpose and endanger all involved.

Ukraine must also move to implement policies that are conducive to men having access to the institution of marriage. Much of violent separatism is motivated by either lack of romantic fulfillment or a prevalence of domestic conflict. For this reason, the Ukrainian government must start paying attention to the marriage and divorce rate, along with incidents of domestic violence. The vast majority of people in Ukraine are not violent. Many live in villages and enjoy the quiet, predictable life. This should be what continues to define Ukrainian culture.

Another key to stabilizing Ukraine domestically is by monitoring how people are perceiving their positive and negative interactions within their immediate environment. Are Russian speakers in Ukraine feeling as though they are being discriminated against or shunned in their daily lives? Are Ukrainian speakers feeling discriminated against or shunned in their daily lives? In many cases, discrimination can be perception. So a solution to this is not always the attempt to correct where the person feels he/she is being discriminated against. In many cases, the key is changing how the person perceives their interactions. An example is a Ukrainianspeaking Ukrainian walking down the street and noticing that a Russian-speaking Ukrainian walking by is staring at him with a stern and disapproving look, while yelling in his direction a derogatory word in the Russian language. The Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainian can perceive that interaction to have an ethnic connotation and subsequently entertain the thought that there is a broader issue of discrimination and hate by Russian-speaking Ukrainians against Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians. Depending on how aggrieved the person is, the Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainian can go as far as altering his societal outlook to one that is militantly hostile towards Russianspeaking Ukrainians, all because of that one interaction. This perception can extend far beyond just glances and words exchanged in public, it can occur in the workplace over firings, unfair promotions, etc. It can happen in schools where bullying occurs. Also in romantic relationship, a person can become radicalized as a result of the breakdown of romantic relationship if elements of Russianspeaking Ukrainophilism were involved. The Ukrainian government needs to tap into these details of their society as factors affecting the sustainment of Ukrainian life. At the moment, Ukrainian and Russian speakers are aware of the conflict concerning both pro-Russian separatists in Donbas and pro-Russian Ukrainian support of the Crimea annexation by Russia. And because of this, many Ukrainians may be perceiving their interactions with those speaking

the other language, to have some form of ethnic connotation. As the conflict escalates, it will become near impossible for individuals in Ukraine to separate their interactions with non-Ukrainian speaking Ukrainians from the larger ethnic conflict. A poll keeping track of how Ukrainians are perceiving their daily interactions with those speaking Russian, and vice versa, is a viable solution. Displaying the results of this at different intervals would allow the Ukrainian government to know if it needs to either apply measures to curb the perception of discrimination, or—if the poll is showing a reduction in the population's perception of discrimination—continue on with the direction their policies have been taking. The key is removing the perception of ethnic connotation in both the positive and negative interactions that typically occur in Ukrainian daily life. This is very hard to do after a major schism. If there is a rise in the perception of discrimination, then perhaps the Ukrainian government can investigate actual discrimination. But it must do so in a way that keeps the Ukrainian government from being perceived as biased. Prior to 2004, when the Orange Revolution took place, the vast majority of Ukraine was heavily geared towards appeasing the Russian-speaking demographic. This was indicative of Kuchma's election to the Ukrainian presidency, not once, but twice as a pro-Russian candidate. In 2014, Ukrainians voted pro-Russian candidate Victor Yanukovich into power, even after 2004 and the subsequent Orange Revolution, when many in Ukraine believed his election victory back then was rigged. So what we have in Ukraine is 3 dynamics that has led to where it is now in 2021—marred by violent separatist conflict taking place in Eastern Ukraine. In 2004, after 2 terms by a pro-Russian candidate, it may be easy to surmise that the majority of the Ukrainian speaking population in Ukraine was beyond this notion of separatism between them and the Russian speaking portion of Ukraine. Taking this into account, it is quite possible that the widespread public reaction to allegations of election fraud concerning pro-Russian candidate Victor Yanukovich did not carry an ethnic connotation at all. This however was not the perception of the minority Russian-speaking demographic in Ukraine, even after a pro-Russian was elected into power for 2 consecutive terms. They would still perceive mainstream outrage at the election results to be a subset of a larger problem of Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian speaker hatred of Russian speakers. So they subsequently threatened a federalization of the eastern portion of Ukraine. This would in turn provoke Ukrainian nationalism. Nevertheless, the Orange Revolution and pro-Russian antagonism against mainstream Ukraine was followed by Viktor Yanukovich's election in 2010. Yet, this still did not ease the perception of Russian-speaking Ukrainians—a perception which maintained that mainstream Ukraine did not want to accommodate them. Meanwhile,

Ukrainian nationalism had already been on alert, owing back to the Russian-speaking separatist threats which followed election protests in 2004. These dynamics came to a head when, under the influence of Russia, Viktor Yanukovich withdrew Ukraine from a EU economic partnership in favor of a Russia-centered deal. Russia was already on alert after observing NATO's unfettered policy in the Middle east (particularly in aiding the overthrow of Qaddafi in Libya and attempting to aid the overthrow of Assad in Syria) and as result, looking to take measures to influence Ukrainian policy against possible partnerships with the EU, NATO, or the US. Now in Ukraine both sides are aware of the ethnic connotation hovering over life and politics in Ukraine and the extremists groups have latched onto protest movements, waiting for the right moment to apply violence and complete the schism. We have Russian-speaking Ukraine responding to their perceptions, Ukrainian nationalism responding to Russian-speaker separatist threats, and Russia responding to NATO policy in the middle east along with their provocation of Russia. All three dynamics would upend the sentiments held by the majority of Ukrainians who were never looking for violent conflict. And now all of Ukraine has to accept the reality of this ethnic/language dynamic hovering over all aspects of their daily life and interactions and the possibility of this becoming a catalyst driving each of them further into their respective side of the schism.

Historically, it has always been easy for minority groups to detect oppression even during times when there was no evidence of a larger ploy by the majority to discriminate against them. Perhaps, a default vulnerable position as "minority" makes them more privy to being influenced by separatist notions, or it could be that combined with the underlying history between what comprises the majority and what comprises the minority, that makes them more keen to go along with ethnocentric activities. History can certainly shape and mold how a group may approach life. However, we see that minority groups historically have rarely shied away from taking advantage of how the actions of a larger or stronger entity against a weaker or smaller one would reflect negatively on the stronger or larger entity. The trepidation applied by the dominant group in being careful not to draw a reputation of being a bully over a smaller group can be perceived as an invitation for the smaller group to throw the dice in seeing how much it can get away with. Usually, when the limit is discovered, the larger group has already proceeded to react, making it too late for the smaller group to cut their losses. Of course, this gambling act is usually orchestrated by ethnocentrics who have succeeded in shaming their own demographic for attempting to enjoin with the larger framework of society, and they do this oftentimes by pointing to historical examples that give credence to nationalistic or separatist arguments. For this reason, minority

groups as a whole have a greater tendency to hold onto the ethnocentric perspective, even in the face of evidence that would argue against the necessity of such a disposition. Because this is the case, they are more likely to turn a blind eye to separatist or violent elements lurking in the shadows within their own demographic.

It takes tremendous effort for a society, especially a diverse one, to reach a point where both positive and negative interactions would rarely draw an ethnic connotation.

When the dominant group embarks upon a conciliatory approach to civil and community life, it is never for the sake of advancing a smaller group. The reason for it, in many cases, is to bring their society to an equilibrium in which differences thereof would not be prioritized in their daily lives, thus giving the society a greater singularity. When progress toward this dynamic is upended, ethnic distinctions began to hover over all interactions of daily life. Slowly, people become less likely to believe that negative interactions they encounter did not have an ethnic backdrop affecting it. After what transpired in Ukraine in the last 15 years, it is quite plausible that Russian-speaking Ukrainians will begin to perceive cultural bias at every turn, even in the slightest of glances. They will go to restaurants in Lviv and ask if the waitress speaks Russian, to which the waitress will answer “Yes” but also roll her eyes in the process, and thus cause to patron to believe that the waitress had a cultural bias simply because she rolled her eyes. Another example is a group of Russian-speaking friends at a park in Kiev speaking Russian, and overhearing them, another group of Ukrainian-speaking people get up and leave, causing the Russian-speaking group to think that they left because of them and their Russian dialect. Yet, it would have been possible that the other group simply had to be somewhere at a certain time, and left when that time came, which just so happened to be at the same time that the Russian speaking group just arrived or started speaking Russian. When ethnic outlooks predominate, that latter possibility is no longer considered.

Before hostilities, it was fairly obvious that Ukraine had become comfortable with pro-Russian-speaking Ukrainians running their government. Even Ukrainian nationalists, though lurking in the background, were kept at bay for the most part. Now that Russianspeaking Ukrainian separatists have helped give rise to Ukrainian nationalism, the rest of Ukraine will have to navigate through life taking this schism into account in all things they do, having to tread carefully when they come across someone speaking Russian or if they are Russian-speaking, having to tread carefully when coming across someone speaking Ukrainian.

At the moment, it is not even about culture anymore. The issue at hand is stopping the bloodshed, never-mind language. It is likely that once the fighting stops, separatism will still linger and Ukrainians will

feel as though they are not living in one country anymore. The only hope then becomes both Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians who can keep Ukrainian nationalism in check and Russian-speaking Ukrainians who can keep pro-Russian nationalism in check.

There is a long history between Russian and Ukrainian, and one cannot ignore it as a factor in this never-ending conflict. Yet the real tragedy is that Ukraine has been never been allowed to start over, wipe the slate clean, and move forward because big brother always has to intervene. Perhaps history can do us a favor as thousands of Russian troops conduct drills at the Ukraine/Russia border, and as thousands of NATO fighters and Ukrainian troops do likewise in Ukraine. Should this continue on its unfortunate trajectory and see its likely conclusion, please don't refer to this as a genocide. Call it what it is and what it has always been, pure unadulterated fratricide.

Epilogue

Volodymyr Zelensky was elected the first Jewish president of Ukraine in 2019, which is quite remarkable considering the fact that many of Ukraine's detractors consider the country as having a longstanding history of harboring antisemitism. In some regards, there were instances of it. During the Khmelnytsky uprising, which was essentially the genesis of Ukraine's statehood, Jews were targeted and a number of them were killed due to the fact that they were perceived as oppressors by the peasant class. And of course during World War II, many Ukrainian leaders collaborated with the Nazis in persecuting the Jews. It is quite often that a precipitating factor, such as being accused of having an unfair advantage in commerce, academia, and government, is levied upon Jews and used as justification by those who are adamantly leaned in the direction of antisemitism. But even should this be the case in some aspects in Ukraine's history, Ukrainians, since their independence in 1991, have nonetheless applied within their own country perhaps an even stronger meritocratic element than France, since prior to the election of Zelensky, Ukrainians had no problem voting into power 2 pro-Russian presidents in Kuchma and Yanukovich. Even this is remarkable considering the historical backdrop, which has been a longstanding oppression by Russian culture over Ukrainian culture. This exhortation doesn't imply that Ukraine is without reservation or is forgetful of the fact that authentic Ukrainian cultural expression is long overdue. What it does indicate is that Ukraine has shown itself to be far more progressive and meritocratic than perhaps any country in all of Europe, picking whom they feel is best for the job, regardless of ethnic backdrop or creed. Perhaps the Ukrainian language is so pivotal to the existence, survival, and statehood of Ukraine, that anyone who should speak it would also be upheld as fully Ukrainian.

Another factor that stands out with regards to Zelensky being elected president of Ukraine is that prior to his election, he was a comedian, starring in "Servant of the People", which was a Ukrainian sitcom about a teacher who accidentally becomes president. Ukraine distinguishes itself here by opting for a leader that presents a disarming, light-hearted aura, as opposed to the common inclination of nations to seek one that presents themselves as strong and assertive. This is a progressive move by Ukraine. Zelensky didn't just win the election, he won in a landslide victory. And this shift away from the typical strong leader could be due to the fact that a pattern of these "strong" types falling into corruption over and over again has made it to where a comedian could garner trust in not falling sway to this aspect of corruption. In some ways it makes sense. If going in one direction is producing a similar result, the next logical step is to try the other direction. Ukraine has adapted quickly, that is for certain. If

Zelensky can avoid falling prey to cultural bias, he may set Ukraine on the path to true meritocracy and progressivism. But if he gives into ethnocentric far-right Jewish groups who want him to exert a stronger tie to his ethnic backdrop, then such could ignite antisemitism. This is what happened when Yanukovich was president—he gave in to the pro-Russian element and ignited an anti-Russian perspective among Ukrainians. This also happened in the United States, and precipitated a major schism there, both demographically and politically. Barack Obama, who was elected as the first African American President in the United States in 2008, later abandoned his all-American methodology of appealing to all Americans, and yielded to the demands of the ethnocentric black demographic that insisted he align himself with their movement. Now, America is irreparably divided. Ukraine can heal itself if Zelensky retains his appeal to all Ukrainians, no matter race, or cultural backdrop. But as far as language, there does need to be some lean in the direction of supporting Ukrainian language. This would set Ukraine on the course to a true independence and sovereignty and also protect the nation from outside forces. A major reason Russia is able to exert considerable influence as of early 2022 is because of the schism that occurred between Russian speakers and Ukrainian speakers, and in order to curtail the permeation of this schism from expanding even further throughout eastern Ukraine, a concerted attempt needs to be made in uniting all Ukrainians under one umbrella. This would require easing up on the anti-Russian sentiments. And downplaying the significance of both pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian outlooks in the lives of everyday Ukrainians. This is imperative because allowing tensions to fester between pro-Russians and pro-Ukrainians by giving credence to those sentiments only raises the likelihood of eastern and southern Ukraine coming under the domain of the Russian Federation. Zelensky must urge Ukrainians to try and go about their day, living life, and pursuing objectives for the sake of individual, family, and community. Stressing the importance of economics and innovation can aid the healing process, and fortify Ukraine from detractors of their sovereignty, but also disarm other demographics from feeling as though they are under siege as a people.

Jews in Ukraine have it more favorable than Jews in other European countries, since Jews in Ukraine, this day in age, do not experience to any significant degree, acts of violence or condemnation arising from the policies enacted by the state of Israel. Ukraine actually voted against an anti-Israel resolution presented in the UN Human Rights Council. Nevertheless, many continue to criticize Ukraine as not having done enough to admit its past role in helping perpetrate anti-semitic violence at important junctures in its history, such as as during the Holocaust. And not only that, many are taken aback by the fact that Ukraine in recent years has pushed for

the celebration of Ukrainians who cooperated with the Nazis for the sake of escaping Stalin's brutality and mass murder of Ukrainians, but ended up only assisting the Nazis in the persecution and elimination of Jews during the Holocaust.

Zelensky's advantage in appealing to both Ukrainian and Russian speakers is largely due in part to his native Russian-speaking heritage, being born in southeastern Ukraine, along with the fact that he supported the Ukrainian Government forces in Donbas. Combine those with his Jewish ethnicity, and he becomes a prime candidate to facilitate peace in Ukraine, able to identify with a diverse population while appearing a neutral component that prefigures objectivity towards grievances coming from both sides. In this manner, he can indirectly appeal to Russia without giving off the impression of a prostration that connotes weakness in the minds of some, and ultimately carve out a path to peace by using diplomacy to deter Russian aggression without alienating the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine from the larger demographic of Ukrainians. As of 2022, his tenure has not played out perfectly, since Russia as of February 21, 2022, recognized the independence of both the Luhansk People's Republic and the Donetsk People's Republic, thanks largely in part to anti-Russian rhetoric coming from the west, which only helped reignite tensions, tensions that President Zelensky aimed at resolving. This has placed a roadblock in the likelihood that these territories would be re-integrated into Ukraine. Still and all, the best way to stop the bleeding is by focusing on the Ukrainian economy and getting Ukrainians focused on their lives again. If successful, more Russian-speakers in eastern and southern Ukraine will slowly began to identify as Ukrainian again. This may not bring Crimea and parts of the Donbas region back to Ukraine, but it would help prevent a spread of Russian hegemony in Ukraine, or if such is contested by the west, a war that could result in millions of casualties.

Another key is to avoid being lured into discourse regarding the historical backdrop of Ukraine and the question of whether or not it inherently belongs to Russia. Taking the high road on this will be the wisest move, for if intellectual discourse on this matter is escalated into polemics, any attempts to resolve cultural and language divide in Ukraine could end up being stifled. Great wisdom and discernment will be required, but President Zelensky has already perhaps had exhibited more capability than any other person in both Russian and Ukrainian history, as far as appealing to both Russian and Ukrainian speakers. After the events which have transpired in Ukraine at the beginning of 2022, Ukraine will find itself having to contend with Russian aggression and information, along with ill-advised and stubborn anti-Russian panic-inducing rhetoric from the west, both of which will have systemic implications for Ukraine's domestic and economic stability.

Certainly another method of preventing the spread of nationalistic and separatist leanings is to simply stop talking about it. Reducing and downplaying the significance of rhetoric regarding the history and contemporary can surely cause resentment in some, but at the same time demagnifying the significance of it gives a diverse population the opportunity and time to connect with everyone in their community, regardless of cultural differences. But this is difficult this day in age of social media. Another key component, which President Zelensky has demonstrated well in response to western panic-inducing rhetoric is by asserting optimism and confidence, for when the United States was propagating that Russia would launch a full-scale invasion of the country, President Zelensky assured the Ukrainian people that was not the case, and even designated the very day the US predicted Russia would invade Ukraine to be a day of unity and singing. This can be applied in future scenarios when extreme nationalism looks to assert conspiratorial rhetoric aimed at stoking fear and alienation among the population. In such a case, the President of Ukraine can quell and dismiss such notions with an incurable optimism. Ukraine presents a unique situation that much of the west is ignorant of. At the moment, there are many in eastern and southern Ukraine who identify as Russian and feel closer ties to Russia. So anyone who likens themselves to be in the best interest of Ukraine must take into account the Russian element that exists there. Any anti-Russian perspectives aimed at signaling a support for Ukraine only serves to sow discord among a diverse Ukrainian population. The west must remain cognizant of this. President Zelensky himself is a native Russian-speaking Ukrainian. If there is to be a Ukrainization of eastern and southern Ukraine as far as language is concerned, then it has to be very slow. In Post-Eurmaidan Ukraine a small majority of Ukrainians support a future in which Ukrainian is the official language of Ukraine. A bill was passed in 2019 called the Law of Ukraine “On ensuring the functioning of Ukrainian as the state language.” Back in 2012, the Verkhovna Rada adopted the “KivalovKolesnichenko Language Law,” which allowed Ukrainians to use regional languages instead of the state one. This gave protection to the use of Russian in many parts of eastern and southern Ukraine, but limited the use of Ukrainian. Now following Russia’s annexation of Crimea and the separatist uprising in eastern Ukraine, language is has become a very sensitive topic, and the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law was declared unconstitutional. President Zelensky has been largely skeptical against the new 2019 law which ensures the function of Ukrainian as the state language. But when proposals were presented to repeal the law, such as the one presented by Verkhovna Rada deputy from the “Servants of the People” party, Maksym Buzhanskyi, protests took place in Ukraine demanding a halt to Russification of Ukrainian schools. The 2019 Law of Ukraine “On ensuring the

functioning of Ukrainian as the state language” sees to it “the comprehensive development and functioning of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of public life throughout the entire territory of Ukraine.” It is also meant for “strengthening the state-building and consolidation functions of the Ukrainian language, enhancing its role in ensuring the territorial integrity and national defense of Ukraine,” and “creating proper conditions for protection of the linguistic rights and needs of Ukrainians.” Under this law, Ukrainian becomes the only state language and is to be held as the glue that binds together the population of Ukraine as one nation regardless of ethnicity and also protects the national security of Ukraine. On education, the Ukrainian language implementation is given a three year period to complete the transition—September 1, 2020 until September 1, 2023 . For students studying in official languages for countries outside of the European Union, the provisions were mandated September 1, 2020. By 2030, all secondary school final exams are to be in Ukrainian. Arts, entertainment and culture are able to use other languages if it is relevant to the content or “justified by the artistic, creative idea of the event organizer” For print media, two or more languages can be applied, however, one of them must be the Ukrainian language. The exceptions are the indigenous languages, such as the Crimean Tatar language, English, and other official European Union Languages. The law also requires that Ukrainian print media comprise over 50% of the selection in all facets of print media distribution. For publishers, the law requires that all official book publishers maintain a statistic in which books in the Ukrainian language constitute at minimum 50% of their annual publishing output. This does not apply to indigenous languages. And for bookstores, it is the same—books in Ukrainian must constitute no less than 50% of the books sold at bookstores. Exceptions are indigenous and official European Union languages. This law was meant to uphold the Ukrainian language, but was met with hostility from other minorities in Ukraine such as Russian, Hungarian, Polish, and Romanian, all of whom will be restricted from studying or receiving an education in their native language. The supporters of this bill insists that it was not meant to prohibit other languages, only to support the Ukrainian language. Russia has spoken against the bill and considered it a violation of the tenets of the Council of Europe, the continent’s leading human rights organization. President Zelensky of Ukraine has stated a desire to amend the bill, seeing how much it may drive Ukrainians even further apart.

For the sake of deterring unrest about the Ukrainization of Ukraine in terms of language, the best course of action would be to extend the transition period on Ukrainian language mandates. This strategy helps ease the fears of Ukrainian language supporters, and at the same time allows Russian-speakers to focus less on language barriers since the transition period is well into the future, beyond the

time of his/her lifespan. In this manner, the Russian-speaker simply advises his offspring to prepare for an eventual transition to Ukrainian, while he himself goes about his day unperturbed about the prospect of any drastic alterations to his lifestyle. He essentially deprioritizes it. This is what is key. Can the Ukrainian President get his people to focus on other things besides language and culture and nationality, and in doing so can he unwittingly unite all Ukrainians. This is not an easy task seeing that some parts of Ukraine have been lost in recent years. But it can be done by quietly asserting language mandates. For instance, if a very slow Ukrainization is applied, schools that opt to adopt Ukrainian language ahead of time as their language can be eligible for government subsidies. While those schools that teach in other languages would still be eligible for deadline extension of Ukrainian language transition.

Much of the original unrest that transpired in Ukraine is centered not so much on cultural issues, but on corruption embedded within political affairs in Ukraine. And President Zelensky arrived on the scene bearing an intent to solve the corruption issue in Ukraine. His reformist intent has quelled somewhat due to the fact that many of his policies have clashed directly with the interests of very powerful oligarchs in Ukraine, who have exerted a large amount of influence on Ukrainian politics and affairs. Many in this sector argue that President Zelensky's attempt to contravene the activities of oligarchs are only a measure aimed at drawing in more power to the government. Oligarchs are notorious for buying out businesses for small sums, and using their wealth to influence media and politics for the sake of garnering for themselves tax exemptions, which thus leaves them little incentive to reallocate their wealth into improving the conditions of the workforce. Zelensky has sought to correct this problem, since it is the case that the spark of unrest in Ukraine originated in reaction to corruption embedded in Ukrainian politics. Ukraine's anti-oligarch law gives the Ukrainian government the power to label an oligarch and restrict them from participating in politics. The president and his staff are also required to report any ties they have with oligarchs. Another aspect that cultivates the influence of the oligarch elite is Ukraine judicial system. Zelensky has also promised to change this sector, but has met resistance from judges that have blocked the bill. On October 27, 2020, the Constitutional Court ruled that the powers of the National Agency for Preventing Corruption (NAPC) are unconstitutional. This removed the requirement of declaring assets and also the penalties that are incurred for dishonesty in such asset declarations. The Constitutional Court is the highest court in Ukraine's government and its rulings cannot be reversed. There is a lack of trust in the judicial system among Ukrainians, as the salary for judges is significantly higher than the average salary in Ukraine. In many cases, the salaries of judges

are grossly inflated, and many attribute this to the influence of oligarchs. Nonetheless, Zelensky moved to reinstate the NACP and the asset declaration requirements. He also attempted to establish a law in which would allow the government to fire all the Court's judges and withdraw their rulings, but this was considered unconstitutional. Since then, Ukraine has attempted too apply reforms to judicial bodies responsible for the evaluation, selection, appointment and dismissal of judges, but much of the efforts to move forward with these proposals were blocked by the Council of Judges. The desire for reforms to corruption in Ukraine will provide a foundation that will prevent the chain of events that bring about unrest, separatism, and violent conflict. Damage control and patience will be key elements throughout this entire process.

Volume II: The Fall of the US Dollar

(written on April 13 2022)

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Chapter 1: The Fall of the US Dollar

The US dollar has already lost 6% of its value between 2002 and 2018 as a result of the US national debt going from 6 trillion to 23 trillion between that time. If the dollar loses its status as the global reserve currency when Saudi Arabia stops selling oil for US dollars, the dollar would decline far more significantly in value. The US economy maintains a large trade deficit and budget deficit. Back in 2006, the trade deficit amounted to a high of roughly 5% of the GDP, and later in 2020, the budget deficit would account for as high as 15% of the GDP. The presence of these two deficits has caused alarm among economists who believe that the US dollar is headed for a sharp loss of value, one in which the transition between an expansive economic growth and a significant economic slowdown would arise suddenly—a consequence that would lead to a large outflow of capital. Macroeconomists have warned for a number of years that the large US deficits are unmanageable and could negatively impact economic stability not just in the US, but all over the world. And some fear that the rising deficits could hamper the large capital inflows that are used to pay for the ballooning deficits. If the deficit and national debt reach unparalleled levels, and at the same time Saudi Arabia stops selling oil in US dollars, such a sequence of developments could cause more foreign investors to start dumping their treasury bonds and at the same time prevent them from buying new ones. Stakeholders could also ditch their dollar-denominated assets, and seek to invest in other currencies. This outflow of capital could force the Federal Reserve to order the US Bureau of Engraving and Printing to print more money so that the deficit and national debt can be paid and the US can prevent going into default. However, the added printing would lead to widespread inflation and price hikes. Pensions and savings would lose their value, which would affect the elderly and disabled community. The only upside for the US in this currency devaluation scenario is a more competitive export market. But in the meantime, prices in the US would continue to rise as inflation becomes hyperinflation. The dollar then continues to lose value and the US's non-dollar denominated debts become more and more expensive and unmanageable. The US then finds itself on the verge of going into default. Consequently, they try to use up their IMF Special Drawing Rights (SDR) allocation to pay down some of the national debt, but it's not enough because the depreciation of the US dollar and it being one of the currencies within the basket of currencies backing the Special Drawing Rights has diminished the SDR's overall value. For this reason, the US has to reach out to the IMF for an IMF loan, but the IMF demands that the US government first cut their spending and reduce their subsidized programs, which leads to millions of Americans dependent on social services being forced to find another

form of income. Crime rates skyrocket. The US tries to reach out to the EU for a loan but Germany refuses because of tensions that arose after the US tried to place an oil embargo on Saudi Arabia after Saudi Arabia chose to sell its oil for Deutchmarks or Euros. Pressure then rises on the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates, as the government is forced by the IMF to pursue austerity measures in order to receive the IMF loan. Unemployment begins to rise as companies start laying off workers and cutting expenses. Those living in subsidized housing are now forced to pay rent, but since jobs are scarce, they cannot find employment and thus become homeless. The US looks to Bitcoin to prop up the value of the US dollar, before trying to liquidate Bitcoin holdings overseas for hard currency, but a new multilateral bloc of nations against US unipolarism impose simultaneous bans on cryptocurrencies, cutting off liquidity. Civil unrest breaks out and communist and ethnocentric factions begin organizing throughout the United States as the wealth gap expands. Lynchings and political assassinations become commonplace. The growing communist movement in the US demands that the Fed loosen monetary policies. Some states give in, other do not. As a consequence, many states along the border that deem themselves more fiscally responsible begin stamping their currency, printing their own currency, and closing their borders and mobilizing state-sponsored militia groups. Articles of secession are filed, but the federal government rejects them and threatens military force against various border states, before deploying federal troops to states threatening secession. The federal government claims the deployment is for the sake of protecting federal property. But some states declare eminent domain and try to seize federal property, and a standoff ensues, and then bloodshed. The US federal government is accused by the international community of committing war crimes, and the condemnation is followed by widespread sanctions. China halts lithium ion battery exports to the United States, compromising US defense capabilities. Russia extends its stoppage of fertilizer exports to the US. Now Europe gets involved. England and France come to the US to help negotiate a ceasefire between seceding states and the federal government. The Russians arrive in Latin America seeking to provide military aid to separatist groups in America via the Mexico/Texas border. Texas becomes the “Ukraine” of the American continent as secessionists seize the opportunity to declare independence. Both Mexico and Russia officially recognize the Texas republic. The war becomes ongoing, but in the end the landscape of North America becomes unrecognizable. The United States has fallen.

The domestic, foreign, and economic policies pursued by the United States in recent years has put the country’s prospect of survival in dire straits. And the above scenario is a very real possibility—most noteworthy, the rise of communist sentiments in

America, a prospect that has gone on the back-burner, thanks largely in part to America's financial institutions maintaining a longstanding application of expansionary monetary policies and quantitative easing. Now with inflation on the verge of going out of control along with the procrastination by policymakers in raising interest rates to correct it, the US economy has reached a point in which any attempts by policymakers to intervene at a later date when inflation become hyperinflation will come with serious economic repercussions that Americans are not ready to face. This late intervention will create serious financial hardship for a multitude of Americans and will provide an opening for the latent communist movements that have been brewing in the shadows of American civic life in recent years. This threat will ensure that inflation remain a problem in America for years to come because in order to curtail growing widespread political support for the communists, policymakers will find themselves having to give in to demands for expansionary and inflationary monetary policy implementations, which will only further exacerbate inflation. This is the consequence of waiting too late to deal with the issue.

The rise of inflation has reignited debate on whether or not the Federal Reserve should remain. While the Federal Reserve has certainly been instrumental in reducing significantly the prospect of bank runs, they have nevertheless come under intense scrutiny regarding their ability to curtail inflation. The Federal Reserve runs the printing press for dollar bills. They don't print the actual paper currency, but they determine how much is to be printed each year. The actual job of printing paper currency belongs to the Treasury Department Bureau of Engraving and Printing(BEP). (Coins are produced by the U.S. Mint). Basically, the Federal Reserve submits an order to the BEP, who then prints the money and sends it to the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve then distributes it to its 28 cash offices, who in turn distribute the money to 8400 banks and credit unions across the country. Those banks and credit unions hold the money as reserves, and the amount they are to lend out is determined by the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, which is comprised of 7 members, all nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The 7 members of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors all serve on the Federal Open Market Committee. All except the Chair and Vice Chair serve 14 year terms. The Chair and Vice Chair only serve 4 year terms. For the 2020 fiscal year, the Federal Reserve ordered 5.2 billion US currency notes valued at 146 billion. So when economic discourse mentions the Fed printing money, this is what they mean. These days, the American money supply is digitally credited or debited to the major banks, and it is not until after the banks loan this money out to the public that the money gets printed. The amount determined to be printed is discussed among the Federal

Open Market Committee(FOMC) and its associated economic advisers. The FOMC is a committee within the Federal Reserve and is their monetary policy making body. They have 8 regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year where they discuss monetary policy, interest rates, and economic conditions. The Fed raises interest rates by influencing the Federal Funds rate, which are the reserves held by banks at one of the 12 regional Federal Reserve banks. At the meetings of the FOMC, the Federal Reserve sets a target for the Federal Funds rate, which defines the interest rate at which commercial banks borrow and lend their excess reserves to each other. The Federal Reserve gets banks to raise or lower their interest rates by either increasing the amount required to be held in reserve or reducing the amount required. When the Federal Reserve increases the amount required to be held in reserve, banks become limited in the amount they can lend out. When the Fed decreases the amount required to be held in reserve, the banks can then lend out more. The Federal Reserve can also influence interest rates by changing the interest rate the Federal Reserve bank pays on reserve balances. This sets an upper limit on the fed funds rate since banks will never opt to borrow from another bank at a higher interest rate than what they would get if they simply borrow directly from the Federal Reserve bank. When the economy does not respond to interest rate cuts, the Federal Reserve turns to Quantitative Easing(QE) through its Open Market Operations in order to help stimulate the economy. They began buying up Government Debt and Mortgage backed securities, reducing the supply of these in the market. By purchasing Mortgage backed securities, the Federal Reserve stabilizes the real estate industry, preventing job losses and increasing investor willingness to buy new mortgages. When the Federal Reserve buys US treasury securities, it raises the money supply and increases the volume of bank reserves. Reducing the pace of these QE activities is called tapering. Tapering can slowdown the economy without a corresponding interest rate hike of short term loans.

Prior to the establishment of the Federal Reserve, America's money supply was controlled by the First Bank of the United States, established in 1791 and then later the Second Bank of the United States, established in 1816. The First Bank of the United States was established by Congress at the request of Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton and was the largest corporation in the country, but largely opposed by rural Americans who were uncomfortable with such a powerful entity. When the bank's charter expired in 1811 (after 20 years), Congress voted against a new one. In 1816, however, politicians developed renewed fervor for the creation of a central bank, and this is when Congress decided to charter the Second Bank of the United States. But when Andrew Jackson became President in

1828, he vowed to destroy it. He appealed to populist sentiments by criticizing the bank's banker-controlled power, and by 1836, when the bank's charter expired, Congress refused to renew it. Andrew Jackson would manage to pay off all of America's interest bearing debt by selling off government-owned land, but left the country without a uniform national currency. After the Second National Bank expired, the nation's money supply consisted of private bank notes issued by state-chartered banks, and were redeemable for gold or silver. Such form of currency system was highly chaotic and by the 1860s, there were 8000 different private bank notes circulating in the US. In some cases, banks would not accept notes issued by banks unknown to them. Ultimately, the rising volume of check transactions led to the creation of the New York Clearinghouse Association in 1853, which allowed banks to exchange checks and settle accounts. These banks also offered demand deposits, which are simply bank deposits that can be withdrawn at any time without advanced notice.

During the American Civil War, the National Banking Act of 1863 was passed. This established nationally chartered banks which issued notes backed by government-owned securities, and also provided the country with a national currency, allowing the government to finance the Union Army during the American Civil War. These paper notes were called greenbacks because of the green print on the back, and were printed in two forms: Demand Notes and United States Notes. In July of 1861, Congress authorized the printing of 50,000,00 in Demand Notes for the purpose of financing the Civil War. These notes could be redeemed for gold or specie; specie is money in the form of coin. The United States Notes, on the other hand, were not backed by anything, but considered equivalent to the Demand Notes. Because of the threat of a severe debt crisis, Congress was urged to pass the "Legal Tender Act" in 1862 which authorized the printing of 150,000,000 in United States Notes. Meanwhile, the Demand Notes were gradually taken out of circulation by mid-1863. The value of the United States Note in relation to gold would fluctuate until after the Civil War when it rose to become on par with gold. When this happened, the United States Notes became convertible into gold. Yet despite the currency stability provided by the National Banking Act of 1863, bank runs and financial panics continued to negatively affect the economy. In 1893, a banking panic triggered a devastating depression in which 575 banks failed or suspended their operations. It was common for banks to suspend operations in order to avoid becoming insolvent by having to liquidate their assets in order to meet the withdrawal demands of depositors. Subsequently, the economy didn't stabilize until J.P. Morgan intervened.

The Bank Panic of 1907 is what led to the creation of the Federal Reserve System and took place between Oct 14, 1907 – Nov 6, 1907. It was triggered by a stock manipulation scheme intended to force short

sellers to cover their positions by buying back their borrowed shares. F Augustus Heinz, a mining magnate who owned stock in United Copper Company believed that short sellers were driving down the price of the stock. Together, he, his brother--broker Otto Heinze, and Wall Street banker Charles W. Morse devised a strategy to force the short sellers to cover their positions and thus create buying pressure that would drive the price of the stock higher. The plan was to aggressively purchase shares of United Copper Company so that the short sellers would have no choice but to buy back their borrowed shares from the Heinzes, who could simply name their price. However, the short sellers were able to find cheaper United Copper Company shares from other sources. This drove the price of the stock down, quickly causing the share price of United Copper Company to collapse. The State Savings bank of Butte, Montana announced its insolvency as they held large stock positions in United Copper Company, which served as collateral against some of their lending. They were also a correspondent bank with the Mercantile National Bank, of which F Augustus Heinze was President. The now tainted reputation of Heinze and his associates as a result of the failed scheme led to a massive bank run in which depositors rushed to withdraw money from Mercantile and other Heinze-associated banks. The panic spread to all financial institutions tied to anyone who was involved in the manipulation scheme. The panic was later brought under control by financier JP Morgan, who put up much of his own money to stabilize the banking system. He also advised other bankers to do the same. The panic underscored the ineffectiveness of the independent Treasury system, which at the time managed the nation's money supply. An investigation of the crisis led to the creation of the Federal Reserve system. During the intervening period, as this bank panic led to growing demands for banking reforms, a consensus for central banking authority and elastic currency grew amongst most Americans. The Aldrich-Vreeland Act was passed in 1908 in response to the panic of 1907 and provided emergency currency issuance during financial crises. It also created the national Monetary Commission to research solutions to the nation's banking problems. The commission developed a banker-controlled plan, but this was largely contested by progressives who wanted a bank under public control, not banker control. However, the election of Woodrow Wilson for President would set the stage for a decentralized central bank, as he would sign the Federal Reserve Act into law in late 1913.

The trade-off that followed the establishment of the Federal Reserve was the rise of inflation. Before the Federal Reserve System, the US economy was more deflationary. In the 1800s, deflation occurred between 1817 and 1860 & between 1865 and 1900. From 1800 to 1940, the cost of living had risen on average only 0.2% a year. It actually declined on 69 occasions. The average annual inflation

between 1790 and 1914 was only 0.4%. In contrast, the average annual inflation between 1914 and 2021 was 3.24%. After 1913, deflation was rare, only occurring between 1930 – 1933 and between 2007-2009. The rise of inflation after 1913 can be attributed to both the elimination of the gold standard and the monetary operations of the Federal Reserve.

From 1929 to 1932, the economy tumbled in what was the beginning of the Great Depression. The stock market crash began on October 24th 1929, Black Thursday, and continued until Tuesday of the next week, October 29th 1929, known as Black Tuesday. The 1920s was marked by economic prosperity, and it was believed that the market would rise forever. In March of 1929, however, the Federal Reserve warned of excessive speculation just before a brief slide. Measures taken to curb speculation could be factored in as catalyst for the crash, since speculation played a large role in the market expansion throughout the 1920s. Banks putting deposits in the stock market was considered as another reason for the crash. The economic downturn from 1930 to 1933 was the first time the US entered a period of deflation after the creation of the Federal Reserve in 1913. It would not encounter deflation again until the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

In 1973 and 1974, the global economy was in a recession, due in large part to a steel crisis, the 1973 oil crisis, and the fall of the Bretton Woods system. More nations were becoming industrialized, and this triggered more competition in the metals industry. In 1973, however, OPEC announced an embargo to all nations supporting Israel during the Yom Kippur war. This, to the detriment of those nations which were heavily dependent on oil. Meanwhile, the rise of dollar printing would become ignited when in 1971, the US pulled out of the Bretton Woods accord where the US dollar was pegged to the price of gold at 35 dollars an ounce, with all other currencies pegged to the dollar.

The Bretton Woods accord was a new global economic order established in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire in July of 1944. Delegates from 44 nations devised an international monetary system known as the Bretton Woods system in order to circumvent barriers that prevented nations from fully cooperating with each other on the international scene. After World War I, the classic gold standard had been abandoned by much of the world, which led to widespread devaluation of national currencies for the sake of gaining trade advantages. Nations were also imposing trade restrictions and protectionist policies, both of which exacerbated the Great Depression. At Bretton Woods, those in attendance formulated an international monetary system that would discourage currency devaluations and at the same time foster economic growth. The primary flow of ideas concerning this new economic system came

from John Maynard Keynes, who was an adviser to the British Treasury, and Harry Dexter White, the chief economist at the Treasury Department. Keynes proposed the creation of a large global central bank that would intervene on the global economy when imbalances occurred. This bank would be called the Clearing Union and it would issue a global currency called the “bancor”, which would be used to correct international imbalances. Each nation would receive a line of credit to help offset the problems of becoming a net consumer, which is basically the result of a nation importing more goods than it exports. This line of credit was also meant to discourage nations from running a surplus—that is, exporting more goods than it imports—since doing so would require canceling excess bancor to the Clearing Union. White, on the other hand, proposed that the new monetary system maintain a Stabilization Fund that would be funded with a number of national currencies and gold worth 5 million which would limit the amount of reserve credit. The plan that was chosen followed along the lines of White’s proposal. However, Keynes concern about nations running surpluses was accounted for with the idea that a clause can be added which would permit the fund to ration the currency of the nation that was running the surplus. It was also decided that the total resources of the fund would be increased from 5 million to 8.5 million. The 730 delegates at Bretton Woods agreed to establish 2 institutions. The first was “The International Monetary Fund”(IMF), which would watch over exchange rates and lend reserve currencies to nations running balance of payment deficits as a result of importing more than they are exporting. The second was the World Bank Group, which would be responsible for giving financial assistance both to nations rebuilding after World War II, and to emerging nations that were looking to develop economically. The IMF was formalized in 1945, as member countries agreed to keep their currencies pegged to the dollar, while the dollar would be pegged to gold at 35 dollars an ounce. By 1958, this system would become fully functional. In 1969, the IMF created its own reserve asset called the Special Drawing Rights (SDR), which is backed by a basket of currencies that figure prominently in international transactions. The IMF’s financial arrangements with member countries are denominated in SDR, and each member country is allocated a portion of SDR based on economic and currency factors(nations with stronger economies tend to have higher SDR quotas and allocation). By exchanging the SDR with other member nations for hard currencies, nations are better able pay off their debts. The IMF also issues hard currency loans to nations experiencing financial difficulty.

After the IMF was initially created, the United States was to be responsible for keeping the price of gold fixed and adjusting the supply of dollars to help foster confidence in gold convertibility. The

Bretton Woods system held steady until US balance-of-payments deficits created an imbalance in which foreign- held dollars would exceed the amount of US gold stock.

The dollar had been freely exchangeable into gold, but when the US pulled out of the Bretton Woods accord in 1971, convertibility into gold was no longer tenable since America's stores of gold had depleted over time. Thus the dollar became a fiat currency backed by nothing, that is, until the Petrodollar Agreement was established by President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1973, as the collapse of the gold standard triggered a worldwide bear market. The basic gist of the agreement was that the US would agree to defend Saudi Arabia militarily in return for all oil becoming denominated in US dollars. Another option of this arrangement would be the purchase of US Treasury Securities with the extra profits from oil sales. Shortly thereafter, an accord was established in 1975, as Saudi Arabia and all OPEC nations would agree to sell their oil for US dollars and also hold their oil proceeds in US Treasury securities. The US would in exchange agree to provide military support and security. The result was that the US dollar became the world's reserve currency since much of the world's energy exchange had be transacted with US dollars. This exponentially increased global demand for US dollars since all foreign governments that relied on oil imports from the middle east had to hold US dollars in order to purchase it. Essentially the US dollar had simply transitioned from the gold standard to the oil standard. And this increased demand for US dollars gave the US more leg room to print higher amounts of money before dangerous levels of inflation could ever set in. The main points of the agreement: The Saudis would sell their oil in US dollars only and invest the surplus profits in US Treasury securities, while the US would agree to assure Saudi Arabia's security with military support.

The standard outlook of intervention is that when inflation is high, the Federal Reserve can normally raise interest rates to slow down the economy. When inflation is low, the Federal Reserve can typically lower rates to speed up the economy. An example of this being applied in real time is when Paul Volcker, the twelfth Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, raised interest rates significantly in 1980 in order to bring the down the Great Inflation that occurred throughout the decade of the 1970s. It is likely that the Great Inflation had come about both as a result of the collapse of Bretton Woods system and as a result of the PetroDollar agreement established in 1973, allowing the US to print more cash due to the higher global demand for US dollars but without any real way to account for the monetary aggregates that are responsible for the financial stability of a nation's monetary system. Money circulation in relation to money held in reserve was hard to keep

track of throughout much of the 1970s, but Paul Volker insisted that the FOMC focus on strategies to deal with the growth of monetary aggregates in order to help bring down inflation. Volker would thus raise interest rates to 20% in March of 1980, before lowering it in June. As inflation subsequently rose again, Volker hiked interest rates back to 20% in December of 1980 and left it above 16% until of May of 1981. Known as the Volcker Shock, this strategy worked and ended the Great Inflation. While this is a simple methodology, it does not eliminate every cause for inflation. While the Federal Reserve can increase or decrease the money supply by raising or lowering the reserve requirements for banks, they still have no control over the price setting by producers of goods and services. Those who sell goods and services can raise prices in response to money tightening implementations and in such a manner that would force policy makers to increase the money supply, further driving inflation. After the 2008 financial crisis, in which the Federal Reserve pumped billions of dollars into investment firms that were on the verge of collapse, the notion of economics took on a considerable change, where money supply became defined in terms of both the amount of it in circulation and the amount of it that could be printed. This is a revolting prospect because now dealers may be less perturbed by fiscal policies aimed at tightening the money supply and reducing inflation. This in itself conjures a reality in which inflation becomes hyperinflation and reaches a point where it will not respond to monetary policy implementations, seeing that in light of the PetroDollar agreement of 1973, producers would insist that the US Treasury Department print more money to keep up with the price of goods. This level of hyperinflation could only be resolved by an overhaul of the current system. Re-institution of the gold standard thus becomes the only solution to curbing inflation. Unless, the Federal Reserve can prove to the economy that simply printing more money is not feasible, even with a backdrop of continuous global demand. This would require another 2008-like financial crisis scenario where firms would be allowed to collapse, as opposed to receiving large sums of bailout funds. The result is the dollar becomes perceived to have more value and as a consequence, inflation comes under control.

In 2008, the stock market experienced one of its worst years, dropping 33%. The Housing bubble and debt bubble were considered major triggers for the 2008 crash. During the housing bubble, investment firms were packaging mortgage loans into securities(Mortgage-backed securities- MBS), and then selling them off to investors, allowing the firm to keep them off their financial statements. Rating agencies rated the MBS, which served as a benchmark for potential buyers. The investors then started using credit default swaps, in which an insurance company would

guarantee to cover the any potential losses from the MBS in exchange for a premium. This proved profitable for many investors and insurance companies. However, when investment firms started having trouble finding buyers for their MBS products, along with rating agencies downgrading them as the credit crisis worsened, investment firms were left having to hold large positions in MBS. This is what happened to Bear Sterns in April of 2008 and then Lehman brothers in September of 2008, as both had to declare bankruptcy. AIG, the main underwriter of credit default swaps was bailed out by the Federal Reserve, since the company was designated as Too Big To Fail. AIG provided protections worth half a trillion dollars, 300 billion to banks in the US and Europe. Failure of AIG would have had global implications. After the Fed bailed out US banks by pumping trillions of dollars into the financial sector after the 2008 financial crisis, inflation did not spike, and this is indicative of how the petrodollar agreement in 1973 provided the US more leg room to provide higher monetary emissions without triggering a correlated risk of high inflation. And in retrospect, the United States lived up to their 1973 petrodollar agreement with OPEC, when in 1989, tension arose between Iraq and Kuwait. Both of these nations are original OPEC member countries, but Iraq accused Kuwait of producing more oil than which was required by the OPEC quota at the time, causing oil prices to drop, which in turn was hurting Iraq's economy and their ability to pay off debts accrued during the Iran-Iraq war from 1980-1988. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had also accused Kuwait of slant drilling into Iraq's Rumalia oil field, which compelled Saddam to declare war and embark upon an invasion of the country. Iraq's conquest of Kuwait led to the 1991 Gulf War in which a coalition led by the United States intervened and repelled the Iraqi forces from Kuwait, and from further advancing into Saudi Arabia, which was the main concern for the US since Saudi Arabia exports 15% of the world's crude oil reserves—the highest of any nation. There was fear that after Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, Saddam would target Saudi Arabia's oil fields. This defense of Saudi Arabia was main point of the 1973 PetroDollar agreement—Saudi Arabia sell oil for USD and in return the US protect them militarily. However, after the year 2000, a number of OPEC nations decided to stop selling their oil for US dollars. Iraq switched to selling their oil for Euros in the early 2000s. Shortly thereafter, the US invaded Iraq in 2003 without pretext. In 2011, Libya threatened to sell their oil for gold, before Qaddafi, Libya's President at that time, would be ousted and killed via a US-backed coup. In 2012, Iran stopped trading their oil for US dollars, and in 2018, Venezuela followed suit and also decided to stop selling their oil for US dollars. Both nations were slapped with devastating sanctions that ultimately crippled their economies. Saudi Arabia is now the last line of defense for US dollar hegemony and the economic

expansion that followed the elimination of the gold standard. But in recent years, the United States has been enveloped within a long-standing disastrous foreign policy approach which had no qualms about giving assurances to militant forces or separatist movements in foreign countries, before abandoning them to the mercy of defeat, which oftentimes devastated the entire country. Such was the case in Vietnam, Syria, and Libya. And now NATO expansion eastward at the behest of the US for the sake of provoking Russia, along with the US's unkept assurances to Ukraine amid a massive Russian invasion of the country has given way to a growing lack of trust in US foreign policy. This will eventually come to a head with regards to US/Saudi relations, which is a critical alliance with systemic implications for the US.

As of 2021, relations between Saudi Arabia and the United States have become strained. Washington D.C. has opted to take a hardline stance against the Saudi Crown Prince and threatened to prosecute him over the killing of Jamal Khashoggi, a SaudiAmerican journalist who was threatening to reveal damning information about Saudi Arabia's war crimes in Yemen. The US President had also vowed to cut US involvement in Yemen, and at the same time continue to ignore the Yemen issue in nuclear talks with Iran. Yemen is a central issue for Saudi Arabia's security due to the fact that the Iran-backed Houthi militant group has used drones supplied to them by Iran to attack Saudi oil facilities. The US's backstep on these issues could lead to Saudi Arabia cutting ties with the US, and refusing to sell their oil for US dollars. If this is the beginning of a strong rift between the US and Saudi Arabia, it will have an enormous negative impact on the US economy. This is also something that could send gold through the roof. Saudi Arabia has so much clout that it was once classified how Saudi Arabia was abusing their position with the US, helping Saudis accused of crimes in the US evade the US Judicial process by extraditing them back to Saudi Arabia. These crimes included manslaughter, child pornography, and rape. Many don't realize that if Saudi doesn't sell their oil for US dollars, there would be no global demand for US dollars, and hence there would be no way the US treasury could continue to print the infinite amounts of currency they are currently printing. This current discord is a direct result of Washington D.C.'s combative foreign policy stance since the 2020 US presidential election. The US-Saudi alliance is a critical alliance and the US may need to hope that the Saudis are not planning to look elsewhere for military assurances. Especially with Germany now both remilitarizing in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and also seeking alternative sources of oil... now that Germany's dependence on oil from Russia may be unsustainable as Russia becomes isolated from the international community. With Germany's economic situation at stake, they may look to compete with the US for

mid-east influence by using diplomatic backchannels to set up oil deals that could be favorable for the euro and the German economy, and of which would undercut US interests and their economic security. Now that the increased production of arms and innovation could provide Germany with tremendous bargaining power, Saudi Arabia may be tempted to seek out more assertive military assurances from other nations besides the US. As Germany becomes further alienated from Russia diplomatically, it may correspond to a much easier decision on their part to agree to defend Saudi Arabia militarily, and that would include getting involved in the Yemen Crisis. Russia in recent years has tried to expand their influence in the middle east, but their ties to an allied consortium of Shiite nations like Iran and Syria made it impossible for Russia to provide Saudi Arabia with the security guarantees that it needs, if such was in fact on their agenda. The most Russia could offer in their attempt to branch out diplomatically from this consortium was allowing Israel to have unfettered access to Syrian airspace, so that Israel could conduct airstrikes on Iran bases in Syria, bases which are used to channel arms and other supplies to Iranian proxies in Yemen, Lebanon, and the Gaza Strip. These diplomatic limitations for Russia leaves Germany as the next best option for Saudi Arabia's security.

Chapter 2: The Rise of Germany's Currency

Saudi Arabia and Germany have maintained a steady diplomatic relationship, further encouraged by the way German officials would classify Saudi Arabia as an “anchor of stability. This is largely derived from the way Saudi Arabia conducted itself during the Arab Spring which occurred in 2011 and affected much of the middle east region. The Arab spring was a string of domestic unrest taking place throughout the Arab world. It started in Tunisia and spread to Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain. Saudi Arabia, however, remained for the most part unaffected. The relations between Saudi Arabia and Germany are sustained on a mutual desire by both nations to foster cooperation on dealing with issues like terrorism and instability. Both Germany and Saudi Arabia share intelligence and each country's domestic security benefits as a result. Saudi Arabia has been instrumental in providing tips to the German government about extremist networks, and has aided Germany's ability to uncover terrorist plots. In terms of economics, Germany is a main supplier of arms and other machinery to Saudi Arabia. A number of German companies have also opened businesses in Saudi Arabia, which increased the trade volume between the two nations.

On the negative side, as a result of growing right wing extremism in Germany, Saudi Arabia is oftentimes perceived negatively as a nation that is defined by misogyny, discrimination, and a poor human rights record. Many point to the Islamic fundamentalist sects in Saudi Arabia as the essence of the country, and a number of German citizens are critical of Germany's export of arms to the country. Much of Saudi Arabia's image in Germany is backed by a great deal of ignorance and lack of scholarship on the country, as only a handful of Germany's academic researchers and writers have been permitted to visit there. There is essentially no thorough analysis of the Saudi civil society which can be presented to Germans for a more accurate picture, and German media coverage of what happens in Saudi Arabia has been limited. Much of this restrained approach is bound to the fact that the German/Saudi relations are pragmatically trade and security related, with each preferring to stay out of the political affairs of the other. Since 2011 when Saudi Arabia showed itself stable amid regional geopolitical unrest, the Germans took a heightened interest in Saudi Arabia politically. This was clear when in 2018 after the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi-American journalist, Germany imposed an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia has proven itself to be the strongest and most stable Mideast nation, and this has led to a growing German presence in Saudi affairs. High ranking officials in both nations embarked upon diplomatic visits to the other's country, and Germany was delighted when King Salman was inaugurated in 2015, with his youngest son,

Muhammad Bin Salman(MBS), appointed to Minister of Defense. However when Bin Salman was appointed Crown Prince in 2017, after King Salman deposed bin Nayef, he became the heir to the throne. This was controversial, and the move was foreseen in a memo published by German Federal Intelligence Service, indicating Germany's heightened interest in Saudi politics.

MBS's move to modernize Saudi Arabia with the "Vision 2030" plan, which allowed women to drive and theaters to open, was covered extensively by the German media and presented Saudi Arabia in a positive light. However, the scrutiny of Saudi Affairs by the German Federal Intelligence service was seen as aggressive. Another report about MBS policy was leaked in December of 2015, and in the report, German intelligence service wrote about how MBS's foreign policy was reckless and militaristic. This gave off the impression that Saudi Arabia is willing to assert its itself politically and militaristically without regard for international ramifications. Many German citizens became concerned in 2015 about the human rights implications surrounding the Saudi-led military campaign in Yemen. Another controversy was Saudi Arabia's role in helping initiate the blockade against Qatar in 2017.

When it comes to Saudi Arabia's domestic affairs, Germany had become concerned about the harsh measures that Saudi officials imposed on various critics of the Saudi government. These critics ranged from political, media, and economic figures. A number of human rights activists that Saudi officials felt threatened by were detained. These occurrences have led to more discussion in Germany about the need to assert more pressure on Saudi Arabia to scale down its harsh policies. Ultimately, the main concern of German citizens is Germany's arms exports to Saudi Arabia. After Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi was murdered and dismembered in the Saudi consulate in Turkey, Germany declared that it would cease arms exports to Saudi Arabia. Germany also requested that a throughout investigation into the murder be initiated. In the mean time, due to the Khashoggi incident, Germany postponed German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas's diplomatic trip to Saudi Arabia.

When it comes the way Saudi Arabia assesses their relations with Germany, they consider Germany a reliable partner and don't hold any long-standing grievances against Germany. Germany has no colonial history in the Saudi region, which puts relations between Germany and Saudi Arabia on a good starting point. However, Germany's involvement in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran has brought into question the nature of Germany's desire to establish trust with the Saudi government. The Saudis and the Iranians have been locked in a proxy war in Yemen. Thus the Saudis are more inclined and in favor of Germany showing more solidarity with the Saudi government by distancing itself from Iran.

Germany's involvement with Iran has drawn some suspicion from Saudi officials, who once accused German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel of being an Iranian agent. This suspicion of Germany among the Saudis became heightened after German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel blamed Saudi Arabian influence for the resignation of Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Hariri. He referred to the situation using the term "adventurism" to describe the Saudi's influence over the affair. Appalled at the rhetoric, Saudi Arabia pulled its own ambassador HRH Prince Khalid bin Bandar Al Saud out of Germany. This led to a fallback in Saudi/Germany bilateral economic relations. Saudi Arabia ordered Saudi ministries to stop conducting business with German companies, and also restricted German politicians from entering the country. Soon enough, however, this protest was ended and Saudi officials looked forward to restoring normalized relations with Germany.

Other areas of German standards that Saudi officials have been critical of is what they see as Germany's risk aversion. And more disappointing to Saudi business officials is the apprehension of Germany to invest more in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has tried to persuade Germany to invest more, asserting that in order for "Vision 2030" to become a reality, more investment is needed. There is a bit of a mix-up in terms of what each country is expecting from the other. Germany wants to establish relations based more on trade than direct investment into Saudi Arabia, whereas Saudi Arabia is expecting Germany to offer more direct investment into Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has high expectations for the partnership.

The diplomatic crisis that unfolded between Germany and Saudi Arabia over the Khashoggi incident, the Lebanon Prime Minister affair, and Germany's involvement with Iran has led to a decrease in bilateral trade volume. The German export volume to Saudi Arabia decreased 13% in the first quarter of 2008. This indicates that Saudi's image of Germany as a trustworthy trading partner has diminished. This also explains why Saudi Arabia has spent a great deal of time reaching out eastward to South Korea and China, even considering selling their oil to the Chinese in 2022 for Chinese Yuan instead of US dollars.

Overall, Germany holds no significant influence over Saudi affairs compared to other nations like France, the UK, and the US. In Germany, Saudi Arabia is still perceived to be somewhat outside the bounds of German cultural and progressive tastes despite the fact that MBS has been pushing for cultural advances in Saudi Arabia, such as allowing women to drive and permitting women to travel alone in public without being accompanied by a male guardian, spouse, or sponsor. Since 2018, there have been small steps by Germany and Saudi Arabia in the direction of improving bilateral relations. Saudi Arabia considers Germany's innovative sector as something that could foster potential for a multitude of Saudi

industries like healthcare, pharmaceutical, and education system. And this could payoff immensely for German investors. One of the main purposes of “Vision 2030” is not just the aim to modernize Saudi Arabia, but also to cultivate an environment that will attract foreign investment. Much of the Arab world has been embroiled in geopolitical issues for some time, but Saudi Arabia has been the pillar of stability and Saudi Arabia has presented a progressive plan alongside this aspect of stability that should compel foreign investment. Policies have already been enacted in Saudi Arabia that will ultimately set women on the path to becoming a major catalyst for economic and social change.

From the vantage point of Saudi Arabia, this “new Saudi Arabia” that is in the works would be unprecedented in Mideast affairs and could have a trickle down effect to much of the Arab world. Such a prospect should further open the door to a more complete engagement on the part of Germany. The changes are already underway in Saudi Arabia and many young upstarts in Saudi Arabia have expressed a desire to establish stronger ties with colleagues in Germany who are also in the start-up sectors. Many in the start-up hub in Saudi Arabia have expressed a desire to work in the fields of renewable energy, and artificial intelligence which makes for great partnership opportunities.

Saudi Arabia has great respect for Germany’s achievements in culture and the arts, and respects Germany’s contributions in the fields of literature, music, and opera. The German embassy in Riyadh has already organized cultural festivities like hip hop concerts, and looks forward to pursuing further opportunities for cooperation in this area, as well as opportunities for Saudi performers to present their artistic qualities in Germany which could perhaps provide insight to Germans about Saudi civic life.

One of the biggest hurdles to establishing a cultural correspondence is rising Islamophobia which could upend German sentiment about German/Saudi relations. However, Saudi Arabia’s efforts to improve the outlook of Islamic nations through modernization could certainly overcome the detriments of Islamophobia. One of the biggest contributions the Germans can offer in its economic relations with Saudi Arabia is by expanding exchange programs. Giving Saudi students access to German academic institutions will allow more Saudis to gain more understanding German culture.

Overall, many of the challenges that could impede the development of greater bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Germany are still possible to defeat. The ability to overcome the diplomatic fallback originating from ongoing discourse about issues of Saudi Arabia’s human rights record, Germany’s growing far right Islamophobia, the Saudi-led military operations in Yemen, and the

murder of Jamal Khashoggi will be dependent on how Germany takes to Saudi Arabia's "Vision 2030" initiative. The crisis in Yemen has turned out to be a major humanitarian crisis, and Saudi involvement has served as a roadblock to further improvements in Saudi/German relations. The Yemen civil war started in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in 2011 which led to the ousting of Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ruled Yemen for 33 years. The anti-government movement consisted of numerous factions, all of whom insisted on Saleh's departure. In 2012, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi was elected to President of Yemen, replacing Saleh. But Hadi would be unsuccessful in uniting the various antigovernment factions, and he also refused to appoint any Houthis to his cabinet. The Houthis had been fighting an insurgency in northern Yemen since 2004, when the government at that time accused the Houthis of trying to overthrow the administration. The Houthis denied this and had since considered their insurgency a defensive operation against attacks on their community by the north Yemen government. The insurgency was sparked when the Houthi leader Hussein alHouthi was killed by Yemen government forces in 2004. In the ensuing years, the Houthis would launch attacks against Yemen government forces throughout the northern region and fighting would then shift near the Saudi border. In 2009, the Houthis accused Saudi Arabia of allowing the Yemen military to use their bases to launch attacks on Houthi positions. Subsequently, Houthi militants began a series of attacks on Saudi border guards, which led to a Saudi military response. The Saudis subsequently launched airstrikes in northern Yemen. In 2011, during the Arab Spring, the Houthis pledged their support to the anti-government movements throughout Yemen, before taking over the Sadaa Governorate in northern Yemen. After Hadi came to power in Yemen, his administration was trying to secure a loan from the IMF, which required Hadi to implement austerity measures such as removing subsidies on fuel, which would consequently cause the price of fuel to rise significantly. This move was contested by the Houthis, who would storm the capital, Sanaa, and demand that Hadi draft a new constitution and form a unity government. When the Hadi administration could not present a favorable draft in line with Houthi demands, the Houthis attempted to seize control of the Hadi residential palace, which led to Hadi and his administrative officials resigning in early 2015. Houthi incursion into Sanaa met with little to no resistance from the Yemen army, which allowed the Houthis to establish an interim government. But this new government was not recognized by many of the political entities in Yemen. Shortly thereafter in 2015, Saudi Arabia intervened, leading a coalition of Gulf states who would begin launching airstrikes in Yemen with the intent to restore the Hadi administration. They also initiated a naval blockage against the Houthis. In 2016, the Houthis attempted to

restore the Saleh administration that they previously protested against during the Arab Spring in 2011. The Houthis tried to establish a political council with Saleh, but Saleh would cut ties with the Houthis soon after and encourage his followers to take up arms against them. However, Saleh would be killed a short while later, and his forces would be defeated by the Houthis in 2017. Meanwhile, the Saudi government accused Iran of aiding the Houthi fighters—a fact that had become evident as a number of Iranian weapons had been intercepted in the Gulf of Aden. Houthi fighters in recent years have launched successful drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities. Throughout the conflict, the US has been conducting airstrikes concurrently with the Saudis, but mainly targeting Al Qaeda operatives in the region. These airstrikes, the blockade, water and food shortages has created a humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen with a death toll in the range of 300,000. The US has been conducting airstrikes in Yemen since 2002, and the number of civilians killed during those airstrikes are unknown. Since 2021, the US has stated their intention to withdraw support for the Saudi led intervention in Yemen. However, things took a positive turn in April of 2022 when exiled Yemen President Hadi transferred his presidential powers to a new political council that would negotiate a ceasefire with the Houthis. The truce will allow fuel to be shipped into Yemen. Saudi Arabia has also pledged 3 billion to support the Yemen economy, and also help facilitate negotiations for the Hadi government to include a wider array of political groups. These developments as of April 2022 would decrease Saudi Arabia's urgency for western military support and security assurances, and thus make it unlikely that they would in the near future scout this type of support from nations other than the US. But should the conflict in Yemen re-escalate and the Houthis resume attacks on Saudi and UAE territory, Saudi Arabia could move quickly to find another security partner if the US remains intent on withdrawing military support for Saudi Arabia against the Houthi militants. In that case one can predict that Saudi Arabia will end the petrodollar agreement which involves Saudi Arabia selling their oil for US dollars in exchange for military support from the US. The Saudis will simply offer this type of deal to a nation that could uphold their end of the agreement. Such would result in the immediate collapse of the US dollar, and exponential rise of the currency of which ever nation Saudi chooses to establish this type of agreement with. Still and all, the deescalation in Yemen as of April 2022 opens the door for Germany to further engage Saudi Arabia diplomatically since Germany's negative public outlook of the Saudi intervention in the Yemen crisis would subside as Yemen stabilizes. In this case, there would be less political fallback in terms of how Germany's relations with Saudi Arabia is perceived within Germany. Yemen stabilization allows the Saudi government to present itself as the beacon of hope for the Middle East, which will

translate to a more favorable impression internationally, which thus gives German investors more confidence to invest in Saudi Arabia. A growing relationship both politically and economically could make Germany a possible candidate for ensuring Saudi security, and if Saudi Arabia is taking a more persistent approach in resolving geopolitical issue diplomatically, such could make it easier for Germany to pledge military support for the Saudi Kingdom, seeing that German military support will be backing a nation that will be making every effort to reduce the need for their intervention, while at the same time allowing Germany to reap considerable benefits as Saudi Arabia helps foster global demand for the German currency by selling their oil for either Deutschmarks or Euros. The efforts of MBS certainly argues in favor of such a framework. But of course in order for Saudi Arabia to part ways with the United States diplomatically, they would have to foresee security issues on the horizon and presume that the US will not intervene on their behalf. Such a calculation would lead to Saudi Arabia looking elsewhere in order to have security measures in place ahead of time.

Because of this possibility, the Federal Reserve must prepare in advance a contingency plan in the likely event of US dollar collapse. Because as of now in 2022, there are 4 major factors that support the idea of such a scenario arising in the near future. 1. German military buildup and isolation from Russia and their need to secure energy imports and deals from the middle east to make up for the economic fall back. 2. Reckless rhetoric towards Saudi officials by the current 2022 US administration 3. The Federal Reserve's slow response to rising inflation. 4. The world's slow transition to alternative sources of energy.

Chapter 3: Rise of the Russian Ruble

Some argue that the US will soon no longer rely on oil imports from foreign countries, and thus it won't matter if US relations with top oil exporting mideast nations deteriorate. While the United States has been experiencing a shale oil boom in recent years, it is not close to being energy independent. Back in 2006, US President George W Bush told Americans during his State of the Union address that "America is addicted to oil." He declared that America should reduce its reliance in mideast oil and reduce the amount of oil it imports from the middle east. It had been long asserted that US reliance on mideast oil stifles America's foreign policy goals. However, within the last decade, the United States discovered an economically viable way to extract oil from shale rock formations underground, which led to the shale boom that would enable the US to become a net oil exporter in 2019. The drilling technique used to extract oil from shale rocks is called hydraulic fracking, and it involves targeting rock formations underground by injecting mixtures of water, sand and other chemicals at high speeds. Because shale is a finite resource and shale wells normally decline much sooner than conventional wells, US production of oil should not be seen as something that will eliminate America's dependence on foreign oil. Not to mention, it takes 6 months to a year in order to boost shale production. Another constraining factor is the limited amount of equipment, workers, and pipeline infrastructure. And because oil is a global market, any changes in oil production overseas will affect oil prices at home, which could affect profit margins for shale oil companies.

Another argument that is used to convey confidence that the US no longer needs to rely on foreign oil or foreign oil deals is one that points out US efforts in recent years to combat climate change. In order to reduce reliance on oil, the west has been looking to solar and wind energy, which would certainly reduce the world's reliance on petroleum products as far as electricity generation is concerned. Transportation, however, accounts for 71% of US petroleum consumption, and for this reason, the US is still a ways away from long distance electric vehicles or vehicles that could run on 100% bio-fuels. And because of this, one can not argue with certainty that a global shift away from the reliance on oil is underway. At the moment, there are a few vehicles that can run on 10% ethanol 90% gasoline, or 20% bio-diesel 80% petroleum diesel. The use of biomass/bio-diesel/bio-fuels for transportation is still being studied and some researchers are concerned about how it could disrupt food distribution. Russia is certainly a case study; how can grain/wheat be converted into ethanol when the west is facing grain shortages because of the war in Ukraine? And what about how bio- diesel will affect animal life, seeing that much of it is extracted from animal fats.

Sure, one can advise that it only be extracted from dead animals, but that will likely not be the case everywhere. Profiteers will have no problem resorting to killing more and more animals just for the sake of attaining greater access to the bio-diesel market. Combine that with the fact that most humans are still carnivores. This literally gives way to a greater demand for dead animals, a prospect that animal rights groups will protest en masse.

In both cases of bio-diesel and ethanol fuels, we have a situation where its production is cutting into food availability. Combine that with the fact that humans still have an affinity for both starting wars and instigating them. So alot of other factors which are still embedded into human society has to change before the world could ever consider a full transition to alternative sources of fuel.

Due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, worldwide sanctions have been imposed on Russia. These have caused inflation in Russia to rise to nearly 10%, and many analyst are forecasting it will surpass 20% by the end of March 2022 as the Russian currency, the ruble, continues to collapse. Russia relies on imported goods such as cars, household appliances, televisions and smartphones, but multiple sanctions levied by the west against Russia has effectuated massive price increases among those products. The price of new cars rose 15%. Russia is also worried about how a reliance on imports for its agricultural industry, such as potato seeds will affect the economic situation. In response to the rising inflation and as a measure to stabilize prices, Russia's Central Bank has raised interest rates to 20%. According to the BBC, the sanctions applied against Russia for invading Ukraine in 2022 are as follows: The United States banned its oil and gas imports from Russia. The UK said they would gradually phase out their Russian oil imports by 2030. And Germany and the EU pledged to reduce their reliance on Russian oil by seeking alternative sources of energy before 2030. The west has also frozen Russia's foreign holdings of dollars and euros, and restricted banks from doing business with Russia's central bank. Some of Russia's banks are being restricted from the SWIFT banking system, which will prevent them from conducting international transactions. This would also delay any accounts receivable owed to Russia for its oil and gas exports. The UK has frozen the assets of all Russian banks, and restricted their access to the UK financial system. The result is that Russia would not be able to raise funds or borrow money within the UK. A number of goods have been restricted from being sent to Russia, while the UK, US, EU, and Canada have banned Russian airlines from its airspace. Assets belonging to Russian president Vladimir Putin has been frozen as well. Russia in response has banned much of their exports to the west, exports which consist of various products, such as telecoms, medical, vehicle, agricultural, electrical equipment and timber. Russia has also stopped making

interest payments to foreign investors holding Russian government bonds, and they also squeezed the liquidity of stocks and bonds held by foreign investors. In light of these developments, one can see how the sanctions will have a detrimental impact on western Europe. Not only in terms of acquiring adequate energy supplies, which might no longer be provided by Russia, but also in terms of food production. Russia and Ukraine account for a third of the world's wheat/grain and barley exports, but now with these sanctions levied upon Russia by the west, along with Russia retaliating by stopping its wheat/grain and fertilizer exports, much of the world that is dependent on such food supplies will have to face the prospect of significant food shortages, and at the same time deal with the impact of how fertilizer shortages will disrupt the very sensitive farming protocols, which could keep crop yields very low. Places like Egypt, Tunisia, and Lebanon are dependent on grain/wheat imported from Russia. Everything considered, Ukraine and Russia are basically world powers in the global food supply industry.

These sanctions against Russia present a catch 22. In one sense, Russia is cut off from the financial sector in the west, but at the same time, they will be able to accrue a surplus inventory from oil and grain production. This leaves the likelihood that Russia will become a major player in ethanol production, as many industries around the world are seeking to transition from 100% petroleum to using a mix of petroleum and biofuels, before eventually going 100% biofuel. With wheat shortages in the west and the middle east, Russia would be able to become the major player in ethanol production since ethanol is produced from wheat and corn, which would be in surplus amounts in Russia as a result of halting their export. This prospect could coincide with a spectacular ruble recovery, should Russia decide to sell ethanol in exchange for rubles and at the same time undercut US corn production by refusing to export nitrogen fertilizer. This would in effect stifle US ethanol production because without adequate fertilizer, the west would not have the surplus corn to produce greater amounts of ethanol. In this scenario, much of the corn would have to be designated for human consumption. As a result of the competition being eroded in the ethanol market, the rising ruble would not undermine the competitive viability of Russia's export of ethanol fuels, should those fuels be sold for rubles. The extra wheat and corn could also be used as a bargaining chip in places like the middle east and Africa, whom will insist on resuming grain imports from Russia. In this manner, Russia could seek out *ospolitik*-type agreements in which Russia would attempt to normalize relations with other nations by being granted some media influence in exchange for grain shipments or fertilizer. This would be for the sake of controlling how Russia is viewed as a nation within other countries. This would also give Russia more influence in the middle east in terms of being able to

mediate peace between warring nations, despite Russia belonging to a consortium of Shiite nations like Syria, and Iran.

A growing dependency on Russia's production of oil, gas, and ethanol blends would bring the west back into Russia's sphere of influence, should urgency about carbon emissions continue to grow worldwide. This would also coincide with a greater global demand for rubles, which would allow Russia to stimulate their economy by safely increasing the amount of rubles circulating within their financial system.

China's financial ties and trading relationship with the United States since 1979, when China joined the World Trade Organization, has been characterized by unfair trading practices in which China would impose much higher tariffs on US goods coming into China than those imposed by the US on Chinese goods coming into the US. Prior to 2018, China's tariffs on US goods were roughly 8%, while US tariffs on Chinese goods were 3%. Many trade analysts felt this arrangement to be unfair. An ensuing trade war between China and the US led to both countries imposing tariffs on the others' exports at around 19-20% circa 2021.

China, throughout its economic relationship with the US, also maintained an approach of orchestrating businesses partnerships with American investors in which the majority of the company would be owned by the Chinese. It was through these ventures that Chinese investors would insist on the transfer of US intellectual property, which ultimately allowed China to replicate what the US produced and thus go from being a trading partner to a direct competitor in that particular market. This undermined the possibility of the joint venture expanding, but provided the Chinese economy with profitable opportunities. When this was achieved, China would usually remove trade barriers on the specific good, which often yielded China a favorable status among the global economic world. This was often followed by currency devaluation, which gave China's now growing export industry an advantage over US export industry, and kept the cost of labor and price of Chinese goods cheaper and more likely to be consumed by the international market. China's joint ventures with foreign investors were set up with a VIE structure, which kept foreign investors from owning any of the company's assets, but allowed the foreign investors to reap profits or losses—via contractual agreements between the VIE(offshore shell company) and the Chinese company, which were not legally binding in China. This often tricked American investors into thinking that they owned an actual stake in the Chinese company, without seeing how China was guaranteed to reap most of the benefit. The Chinese, if they wanted, could then sabotage the company by restricting it from being transparent with their audits, which would lead to the SEC delisting the company, and thus causing investors to lose millions, with those

Chinese investors who set up the VIE being able to keep much of the foreign investment. China has also orchestrated agreements with nations in central Africa, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in which China would agree to build roads, schools, and hospitals there in exchange for Chinese companies being allowed to mine mineral resources like cobalt and copper. Cobalt is one of the main components of lithium ion batteries which are used in electric vehicles and also in critical military equipment such as submarines, surface warships, jet fighters, surveillance aircraft, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems, satellites, etc. Without cobalt, batteries would not have the self-cooling component that mitigates the chances of overheating and fires. And without an adequate supply chain of batteries, much of the nations' climate change efforts and more noteworthy their defense capabilities would be severely compromised. Because the Congo is sitting on 70% of the world's cobalt supply, the country has become a top attraction among nations looking to make the transition to electric vehicles. However, China has met criticism from the DRC president, whom in 2021 had called for a review of the contract concerning the multi billion dollar cobalt-for-infrastructure project originally established between China and the DRC in 2008. Thus far much of the funds have been more heavily prioritized to the mining projects, as opposed to the job creation/infrastructure projects that China agreed to help develop. The DRC has since kicked out or asked a number of Chinese-owned mining companies in the Congo to leave, believing that they have cheated the Congo out of money owed to them from the agreement to develop infrastructure in the DRC in exchange for mining cobalt, and also disregarded the environmental regulations of the DRC. Under the original agreement established in 2008, the DRC was to essentially barter its cobalt and copper minerals in exchange for China developing 9 billions dollars worth of infrastructure, which the DRC would agree to pay back at 0% interest rate. Over the years under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, whom is helping the Congo with its debt woes, China agreed to reduce the loan to 6 billion. China also canceled a small portion of the loan during the 2020 pandemic to help the DRC deal with the economic fallback from the COVID-19 crisis. Just as Saudi Arabia is the primary focus of energy production regarding oil, the Congo is the primary focus of production regarding electric power, as cobalt is the most critical element in battery manufacturing.

In March of 2022, Saudi Arabia was considering selling its oil to the Chinese in exchange for Chinese Yuan instead of US dollars. The consideration led to a brief spike in the value of the yuan. However, without a guarantee of military support from China, specifically in regards to the threat of Iran over Yemen, Saudi Arabia is unlikely to ratify such an oil deal with China. China's propensity for unfair

dealings could also deter Saudi Arabia from ever seeking out security guarantees from China. All the while, Chinese mining companies being met with suspicion from the DRC would allow Russia to step in and possibly corner the cobalt market, which would give Russia a long term strategic advantage. Russia has forayed into central Africa in the hopes of securing mining contracts. One example is Russia's relations with the Central African Republic (CAR). In recent years, the Central African Republic(CAR) has been embroiled in civil unrest stemming from 2013 when President François Bozizé was overthrown. However, in 2016, Faustin-Archange Touadéra was elected President of the CAR, but has met consistent opposition from rebel groups situated in the country. Both Russia and France have sent troops to aid Touadéra's government, but the CAR has found the Russian aid to be more successful in training CAR fighters to defend the government against the rebel militias. The deal established between Russia and the CAR was that in exchange for military support and training from Russia, the CAR would allow Russia to access its deposits of diamonds, gold and uranium. If Russia orchestrates a similar deal with the Democratic Republic of the Congo(DRC), Russia will attain access to 70% of the world's cobalt reserves, which would provide Russia considerable influence over China's battery manufacturing market and also the defense capabilities of most nations. China relies on the mineral cobalt to manufacture lithium ion batteries, while US defense relies on China's export of those batteries. Russia's invasion of Ukraine gives Russia access to eastern Ukraine's 500,000 tons of lithium oxide, which under the scenario that Russia secure a cobalt deal with the DRC, would allow Russia to usurp China as the lead supplier of lithium ion batteries. Combine this with the aforementioned possibility of Russia gaining control of the ethanol market by withholding fertilizer from the US, Russia thus becomes the global leader and supplier of the critical climate control resources: electric and bio-fuels. Such a prospect can be used to the advantage of the DRC. The Democratic Republic of Congo's president could begin a plan to integrate Russia in tandem with the already existing Chinese mining companies in the Congo and usher in a phase of Russian mining companies being allowed access to increasingly more of the Congo's cobalt reserves.... in a deal that would provide the DRC with military aid from Russia. A start would be expelling from the Congo the Chinese mining company "China Molybdenum", whom the DRC has already suspended from operating one of the world's largest cobalt mining sites, the Tenke Fungurume copper and cobalt mine. China Molybdenum was cited by the Congolese government for safety violations, not reporting cobalt and copper extraction totals, and also withholding royalties owed to the DRC from the mineral acquisitions. If the DRC expels the Chinese company and nationalizes the cobalt mine, they can offer the Tenke Fungurume copper and

cobalt mining site to the Russians. Such a mining deal for Russia, however, would have to come with a major stipulation. The stipulation should be that Russia allow the President of the DRC to take a lead role in mediating for resolutions aimed to resolve Russia's geopolitical conflicts, with the eventual goal of persuading Russia to apply a fully diplomatic course of action. In exchange for being allowed serve as a major mediator of peace in eastern European geopolitical crises, the Congolese President would set up a deal that would allow Russia to access the Congo's cobalt mineral reserves in exchange for military support. In that scenario, with Russian and Chinese mining companies now extracting cobalt in the DRC, the DRC can pass a bill that would allow them to nationalize or hand over mining sites of companies engaged in unscrupulous practices. For example if a Chinese mining firm is committing various violations and abuses, the DRC can remove the company as an operator of the mining site and replace it with a Russian company. This infuses a competitive element in the mining industry within the DRC and should help deter abuses, cheating, and violations by foreign mining companies. This would also help ensure that the DRC gets its fair share of royalty payments and infrastructure development. Due to IMF aid, which the DRC is currently receiving in 2022, the DRC should be careful establishing mining deals with the Russians, as the IMF has already suspended the ceremonial role held by Russian representative, Aleksei Mozhin, over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, the fact that this deal with Russia is predicated on Congolese mediation in helping to resolve Russia's geopolitical conflicts, the IMF might not see this as a major issue affecting their loan agreement with the DRC.

Russia and China controlling the cobalt market would allow such nations to establish deterrence against aggressive and provocational western nations looking to interfere with domestic stability in eastern countries. In recent years, due to China's role in producing lithium ion batteries which the US depends on for its electric and defense capabilities, the US by default has had to maintain a careful approach in dealing with contentious issues regarding China's geopolitical agenda. It was either that or face the possibility of battery shortage if China would decide to withhold its battery exports from the US in retaliation for any US hostility towards China. Russia, on the other hand, had only been able to apply such leverage against Germany, whom had been reliant on Russian oil, gas, and wheat exports. And for this reason, Germany had become more than compelled to apply conciliatory measures towards Russia in order to avoid upsetting this delicate arrangement, which if compromised would have systemic implications for the German economy. These dependencies are without question a deterrent to the aggressive militaristic and provocational approach since nations would prefer to maintain an

accordance, resulting in a stable economy than to upset the balance by risking a war and an economic crisis. Under a cobalt deal between Russia, China, and the DRC, Russia would now be able to elicit a greater dependency from western nations that are reliant on lithium ion battery exports from the east. This dependency that would deter provocation and expansionary motives. The threat of Russia withholding cobalt exports to China in order to deter western hostility, would result in a decline in the amount of batteries that China can produce and export to the west. This would thus affect western nations, and also compel western nations to avoid cultivating hostilities with Russia since their choices in this case would be either diplomacy, or risk losing electric energy supplies. The importance of this cannot be understated because even in a future where the current geopolitical crisis between Russia and Ukraine eventually comes to an end, the west will still have its eye on the land that Russia sits upon, and will also seek to justify some form of incursion to try and separate Rus people from Rus lands in order to acquire the vast variety of resources and mineral deposits situated there. Lack of sufficient mineral resources in western Europe and the United States for the sake of maintaining their industrial efforts has been a factor leading to their need to interfere in mid-east, Latin American, African, and Russian geopolitics. Before Saudi Arabia was a proven oil-rich land, Russia had been the primary reservoir of oil and grain. Poland, France, Germany, Sweden have all historically either tried to invade or justify the military conquest of Russia for this very reason. Even when conflict broke out between western nations like England and France in 1812, Russia's export of grain to England during that time had become a flashpoint precipitating a French invasion of Russia. Germany's military incursions east towards Russia during World War I and II were largely motivated by acquiring access to Ukraine's grain production and Russia's oil, which Germany needed for sustaining its logistics, artillery and other military hardware. Germany could not produce enough oil or grain from their own land.

The DRC government not only needs training for its defense, but also arms and infrastructure since much of central Africa is marred by violence, corruption, and in-fighting. There are a number of rebel groups in the Congo that have been able to acquire weapons via the illegals arms export industry from various parts of the world. However, some of the rebels have sought amnesty from the DRC and want to be integrated into its government forces. Germany should seek to establish an arms deal that coincides with the Congo's efforts to do just that—provide amnesty and integration of rebel groups into the DRC. However, Germany should buy the arms from Ukraine before shipping them to the DRC, which would help regulate sporadic arms dealing in the Congo and allow Ukraine to dominate the market and recover their economy. The training of DRC defense forces,

however, should be conducted by Russian personnel. In exchange for an amnesty for arms deal between Germany and the Congo—which entails that if the DRC provides amnesty to rebel groups, Germany would supply arms to the DRC government via purchasing them from Ukraine—Germany would be allowed to build a dam in the Congo for green hydrogen development. Germany has been trying to transition to electric energy production using hydrogen, with a goal of mass producing hydrogen fuel cells for electric vehicles. Unlike lithium ion batteries, hydrogen fuel cells do not rely on cobalt. They are developed with platinum. Research, however, has found that cobalt can substitute platinum in hydrogen fuel cells and also lower the cost of production. Should Germany seek an option to use cobalt instead of platinum, they could simply purchase the cobalt from either the Chinese or Russian mining companies operating in the Congo. Furthermore, should Germany establish a deal with Saudi Arabia where Germany would agree to uphold Saudi Arabia's security in exchange for oil being traded in Euros or Deutschmarks, The DRC should set aside a volunteer group for the German army via a Congolese military base in Germany. This creates a supply chain of dependency where the DRC is reliant on training from Russia in exchange for offering cobalt mining contracts, arms from Germany who buys them from Ukrainian oligarchs which will help Ukraine's economy recover, and infrastructure from the Chinese in exchange for cobalt mining contracts. This leaves us with a new consortium of nations for world peace and stability: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Russia, China, Ukraine, Germany, and Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 4: Russia's International Support

Coinciding with Germany's increasing engagement with Saudi Arabia, will be Russia's engagement with Latin America. During the Cold War, the Cuban Revolution in the 1950s provided a strategic framework for the Soviet Union's subversion of US security interests in the western hemisphere. Havana thus became ground zero for Moscow's efforts, and it was there that the Soviet Union established a military base. For a number of years, the Soviet Union provided direct military aid to Cuba via shipping arms to Havana. They also supported other leftist/anti-US regimes in Latin America during the Cold War. But when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Moscow had reduced their presence and influence there, which ultimately took Russia off the radar of the US security apparatus. Nevertheless, the new Russian Federation inherited some of those Latin American/Soviet ties of the past, but at the same time, Russia was aware that any attempts to re-establish those Cold Era partnerships would require the type of arrangement that Russia would not be able to afford. And this was the case initially after the establishment of the Russian Federation in 1991. However, things would change in the late 1990s, when Russia would increase their engagement of Latin American countries and seek to forge greater cooperation, especially with those nations who were having contentious issues with the United States, one such being Columbia. Russia's support for Columbia's president at the time, Ernesto Samper, despite his ties to drug cartels, led to Columbia purchasing Russian military helicopters instead of US machinery. This move by Columbia was in breach of a deal in which Columbia agreed to purchase US-made equipment. Russia followed up by looking to establish—for its arms exports—a market in Latin America. Thus, Russia's trade relationship with Latin America increased, more specifically with countries like Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico. Still and all, it was largely less noteworthy than Russia's trade agreements with much of Europe, and Russia's ties with Latin America at this time in the late 1990s/early 2000s posed no security issue to the United States. Despite that being the case, many Latin American countries would become, nonetheless, more compelled, as a result of this Russian engagement of the region, to not only exert more defiance to US interests, but also seek to establish themselves more prominently on the international scene as major players in global affairs. Russia was further able to establish rapport with Latin American countries by way of their aloof-ness towards internal domestic policy within Latin American countries. Russia normally wouldn't question Cuba or Venezuela about human rights abuses, and Russia knew that those countries would not question them in a similar fashion. Since the 2000s, amid NATO's growing expansion eastward, Russia's concurrent anti-Americanism

and insistence on a multi-polar world order found resonance among leaders in Latin America. Hugo Chavez, Raul Castro, and Daniel Ortega were among Latin America's most Russia-friendly leaders. Russia's nostalgia movement, which glorified the era of Russia's past—from the Russian empire to the Soviet Union—coincided with Russia's engagement of Latin America which has its origins during the time of the Soviet Union when the Soviet Union set up a military base and ballistic missiles in Cuba in the 1960s. At the same time, those high ranking officials in Latin America who had fond memories of the Cold War era insurgencies there were welcoming of this desire to re-establish those close ties. They also knew that if such close ties were unattainable, they could still benefit financially from a cooperation with Russia. And this turned out to be the case. Cuba had its Soviet era debt canceled by the Russian Federation, and along with Nicaragua and Venezuela, received financial aid from Russia in exchange for recognizing Russia's policy within Russia's geopolitical sphere of influence in eastern Europe. Those Latin American countries recognized separatist regions in Georgia, and agreed to allow Russia to set up sovereign military bases in their countries at a future date. In 2014, Russia's defense Minister Sergei Shoigu announced Russia's plans to build military bases in Nicaragua, Cuba, and Venezuela, and much of this effort was motivated by US influence in the Ukraine crisis.

Back in 2011, Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout was convicted in the United States on four counts of conspiracy to sell anti-aircraft weapons to Colombian terrorists for the purpose of using them against Americans. This was to the dismay of the Russian Federation, whom would accuse the US of violating international standards of arrest and detention. In retrospect, the engagement of Russia towards Latin America since 2000 and more ominously after 2010 has been for the purpose of dealing with US policy in eastern Europe, which has been a policy that largely ignored Russia's concerns. Even back in 1997, Boris Nemtsov, who was Russia's Deputy Prime Minister at the time, would state during a visit to Latin America that a Russian presence in Latin America could help Russia deter any US anti-Russian influence near Russia's borders. US support for Georgia and Ukraine in 2008 and 2014 respectively led to Russia scaling up its military cooperation with Nicaragua.

Russia's engagement in Latin America is not solely for the purpose of military and economics, but for promotional reasons. Russia has promoted their growing ties with Latin America to the Russian audience as something to be part and parcel of Russia's growing global influence and their audacious defiance of the United States, setting up military cooperation right in their backyard. However, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which had a negative impact on how Russians view the Kremlin, Russia may

become more urged to establish media influence in foreign countries for the sake of mending their international reputation, and this could become more evident in Latin America. It is possible that Russia may seek to promote its culture abroad by persuading foreign countries to broadcast Russian TV or Russian media on their networks. Russia, in recent years, had certainly presented Latin American culture to the Russian public, and because of that, the Russian public is more aware of Latin America's importance to Russia. Russia has also established Spanish-language broadcasting division for its RT network. While based in Moscow, the RT Spanish channel has bureaus in Cuba, Venezuela, and Argentina. It can be expected that Russia's engagement of Latin America, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022—largely motivated by NATO expansion—will expand considerably along economic, military, and political lines, and will reach as far as Mexico. The growing Latin American population in Texas will pose a serious risk to America's geographical overlay as Russia will likely seek to instigate separatism there. With the aid of Critical Race Theory doctrines being spread in US schools, Russia may find it even easier to sow discord among Americans. Heightened Russian influence will also embolden nations in Latin America to exert more political assertiveness with less and less regard for US interests. Due to this developing situation in Latin America, security agencies like the US's CIA and Russia's FSB will increase their intelligence gathering operations there, leading to a very intense intelligence and subversion war as American sentiment in Latin America will become of grave concern for the US amid a diplomatic tug or war between the US and Russia for the support of Latin American leaders. Much like Ukraine was the ultimate goal of NATO in Eastern Europe for the sake of cementing US dominance over Russia, Texas will be the ultimate goal and primary focal point of Russia's intention to destabilize the United States and end its unipolar moment. Russia will look to achieve this goal by slowly making their way from Latin America.

Western outrage and sanctions imposed upon Russia will likely only have a short term effect on the Russian state. In fact, the residual effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine will in the long run more negatively impact the international economic standing of the United States. It has been clear that even throughout the Russia/Ukraine war, many nations have been apprehensive about excoriating or confronting Russia about its full-scale invasion of its foremost western neighbor, Ukraine. A good portion of these reluctant countries are in fact US allies. The nations which declare an almost unconditional backing of Russia since the invasion of Ukraine have been Syria, Belarus, Eritrea, North Korea, Cuba and Venezuela. Other countries like China have taken a conciliatory approach, choosing not to refer to Russia's military incursion of Ukraine as an "invasion."

China has also refused to participate in widespread western efforts to sanction Russia. Much of this trepidation among nations to enact reprisals against Russia is largely due in part to their economic and military ties to Russia. Russia has been able to use their vast resources of oil, arms, and defense to secure strategic partnerships. Because of this, Russia may have a lifeline to escape any long term impact of the economic constraints levied upon them by the west. Russia is paying close attention to those nations that have benefited from Russian ties, but considers China as its most critical partner who can mitigate the damage that sanctions will trigger. Many consider China's strong ties to Russia as a possible catalyst towards productive peace talks between Russia and Ukraine with China as a mediator.

Russia provides 60 percent of India's military artillery, as the byproduct of a relationship that spans decades. For this reason, India has declined to engage in provocative rhetoric about Russia's war in Ukraine, and has also encouraged for a peaceful solution to the crisis. They also applied this approach after Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. There are certain implication for India that would come with ostracizing Russia, implications that India is not prepared to encounter in the near term. India has attempted to wean itself from its arms reliance on Russia by pursuing arms deals with other nations, but has nevertheless remained reliant on Russia in this regard. Such has been imperative due to the hostility India has encountered from Pakistan and China, which is why India is very eager about measures that could end the Russia/Ukraine war. In the meantime, India's central bank is considering a trade agreement with Russia that would involve the exclusive use of Indian rupees and rubles for transactions. India also continues to buy Russian oil and gas and is looking to set up a deal in which India would buy 3 million barrels of oil from Russia at a discount.

Israel is another country that has been reluctant to impose sanctions against Russia since it is in their law that they could only apply sanctions against a country that has been anathematized to be an enemy to Israel. Israel has also vowed not to supply arms to Ukraine, and refuses to sell pegasus spyware to NATO members. However, Israel has volunteered to mediate peace between Russia and Ukraine, as Israel's Prime Minister has spoken to both the Russian president Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Much of Israel's cautious approach towards Russia has to do with Russia's presence in Syria as an ally to the Assad government, and the fact that Russia has allowed Israel's air force to conduct strikes on Iran bases stationed in Syria. Iran stores arms on Syrian soil and ships them to Hezbollah in Lebanon and militia groups in Yemen and the Gaza strip. In being allowed to access Syrian airspace, Israel can better protect their own national security.

In this regard, Russia is a critical ally for the state of Israel, and the biggest gain that Russia can acquire in relation to Israel is media support that could combat western propaganda which has largely painted Russia as a longstanding threat to the United States and the world since World War II. As a stand-between between Israel and Iran/Shiite and Sunni sectarianism, Russia will be able to garner considerable media aid from the likes of reputable and renown news outlets such as the Jerusalem Post and Al Jazeera, both of which will become central to the reporting of global affairs.

Saudi Arabia and OPEC member countries have also remained keen to avoid condemning Russia for the invasion of Ukraine. Saudi Arabia and OPEC consider Russia as a critical ally in the regulation of global oil prices. In 2019, OPEC invited Russia to be part of an expanded network called “OPEC+” to help facilitate cost-efficient and profitable oil output for the purpose of countering the American shale oil boom. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Saudi Arabia has refused requests by the US to increase oil output in order to combat the rise of oil prices that came about as a result of sanctions and the oil embargoes against Russia. Thus Saudi Arabia has indicated that they are unwilling to compromise the strategic partnership between OPEC and Russia on global oil output.

While Turkey has condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, they have refused to sanction or cut off Russia’s access to their airspace. Turkey’s considers Russia’s presence in Syria as a deterrent to the development of a possible Kurdish state near Turkey’s border. Turkey has also purchased s-400 anti-aircraft missiles from Russia and set up energy contracts. Still and all, Turkey remains intent on navigating all sides of the conflict. Despite their ties with Russia, Turkey has delivered Turkish made drones to Ukraine, which have helped Ukraine resist the Russian invasion.

South Africa has openly blamed NATO for the war in Ukraine and refused to condemn Russia. For South Africa, their perspective is heavily rooted in a backdrop going back to the Cold War era when the Soviet Union backed anti-apartheid activists in South Africa, while the United States would maintain their support for the apartheid regime for a number of years.

Chapter 5: The First Non-Aggression Pact

It is quite often pointed out that because NATO is applying the same restraint towards Russia after Russia's invasion of Ukraine that France and England applied towards Germany after Germany invaded Poland in 1939, the result will somehow be the same—just as Hitler became emboldened to embark upon an imperialist agenda, Putin will likely try the same approach. In 1939, France was hoping to deter German aggression by mobilizing near the Franco/German border along the Maginot line, much in the way NATO thinks it could deter Russian aggression by mobilizing its troops near the border within each NATO member country. This approach certainly didn't work then and many believe it will not work in the case of Russia's intentions after their invasion of Ukraine. In retrospect, France could have invaded Germany before Hitler decided to strike first, but that would require coming off as the aggressor, not really knowing at that time that Hitler was planning to take over the world and kill 6 million Jews. But in hindsight, striking first certainly may have stopped Hitler. Another factor in Hitler's decision to expand his military operations was due to the fact that after Germany invaded Poland, both France and England declared war on Germany. In this regard, Hitler had every reason to believe that both nations would eventually attempt to stifle or attack Germany. In contrast, no onlooking nations as of March 27, 2022 have formally declared war on Russia because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Of course, there is another aspect that can be called into question in terms how the invasion may be sowing the seeds of a greater conflict. That aspect pertains to how sanctions are isolating Russia from the international economy, much like the Treaty of Versailles isolated Germany from the international economy. And it is quite similar how both economic restrictions uphold a constraint which ultimately keeps the nation from compensating for previous malfeasance and also paying their debts to recipients who are removed from the nation's foreign policy mishaps. After World War I, Germany had trouble paying reparations and debts because their access to economic revenue was cut off. At the same time, Russia, even if they would oblige, could not pay reparations if their revenue stream is cut off. In March of 2022, after heavy sanctions were levied upon them, Russia had to scrape up much of its US dollar holdings in order to meet its Eurobond obligation. Eurobonds are offshore bonds denominated in hard currency, usually US dollars, that nations can issue in order to raise money. Had Russia not stockpiled US currency, they would have not been able to meet that obligation and many investors who are far removed from Russian policy making would have incurred serious losses. This draws upon a very valid question; can financial constraints be applied in such a way that the nation under condemnation would be

punished economically, not to the point where it cannot meet the very obligations that those constraints put into place. Lets consider the famous economist John Maynard Keynes. John Maynard Keynes was in attendance at the Paris Conference, but left abruptly in protest of the treaty, which he felt was counter-intuitive and setting the stage for further conflict in Europe. In his book, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, which was published in December 1919, Keynes was adamant that the stiff penalties imposed by the Treaty of Versailles upon Germany after World War I would lead to the economic collapse of the country, and thus give rise to geopolitical unrest. In the fall of 1918, it had become very clear that Germany was unlikely to win the Great War(WWI). Germany had become depleted militarily after 4 years of attacks, and could no longer resist the onslaught of allied forces, which had been reinforced by US entry into World War I. In order to circumvent a catastrophic outcome for Germany, the German government reached out to US President Woodrow Wilson in October of 1918, and requested that he help set up an armistice agreement. President Woodrow Wilson had earlier that year laid out a peace accordence called Fourteen Points and the League of Nations, which was a proposal outlining how post-war recovery should be approached by the nations of the world. Germany had requested that the armistice follow along the lines of Wilson's Fourteen Points, which included:

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view. 2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants. 3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance. 4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest points consistent with domestic safety. 5. A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty, the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined. 6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere

welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their goodwill, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy. 7. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired. 8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all. 9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality. 10. The people of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development. 12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development; and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees. 13. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenants. 14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small [states] alike.

On November 11, 1918, the US would comply with Germany's request and an armistice established along the lines of the Fourteen Points was signed and effectuated, ending the fighting in World War I.

In January 1919, John Maynard Keynes attended the Paris Peace Conference as a representative of the British Treasury, having become well-known for his brilliance in financial strategy. During the conference, he sat on the economic council as an advisor to British

Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Much of the conference's decision making authority would be wielded by President Wilson, Prime Minister Lloyd George, and French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau. Germany was not given any role in the conference, which ultimately left their fate in the hands of the aforementioned allied countries. Shortly after the conference convened, it became apparent that the treaty would be very different from the previous armistice settled between Germany and the US back in November of 1918. Wilson caved in to mounting pressure from France, who was seeking revenge for the constraints levied upon them previously by Germany after the Franco Prussian war in 1871 under the Treaty of Frankfurt. Lloyd George tried to remain neutral, but ultimately sided with France and agreed that Germany be forced to pay reparations for damages to civilian life and property in Allied countries. The Treaty of Versailles blamed Germany entirely for World War I, and forced Germany to cover the damages to allied countries, and at the same acquitted Allied countries from having to pay for damages they inflicted to German civilians. The treaty was designed to crush Germany, take away 10% of their territory, disarm them, restrict their access to maritime trade, confiscate their foreign financial reserves and merchant carrier fleet. All of this was topped with a 30+ billion US dollar reparations obligation that Germany was required to pay, with a stipulation that if they didn't, the Allies would be in their right to invade the country. This horrified Keynes, who offered a plan in which Germany would be granted a loan for basic items as they work on making reparation payments. Lloyd George approved of this proposal, but Woodrow Wilson believed that it would be rejected by Congress. Keynes, who was extremely disappointed with Wilson's explanation, resigned from his role at the Paris conference. Germany, at first, refused to agree to these terms, but ultimately gave in as the Allies set up a food blockade of Germany, which forced Germany to sign the treaty.

As expected, Germany shortly thereafter fell behind on their reparation payments, and in 1923, France and Belgium forces occupied the industrial Ruhr region as accorded by the Treaty of Versailles, which stated that the Allies could invade if Germany falls back on its reparation payments. At the time, part of the reparation payments were to be paid by Germany in the form of coal exports to France, Belgium and Italy annually for a period of 10 years. This incursion by French and Belgium forces was met with protests by German workers, who would close down factories in the Ruhr region. The result of this led to extreme inflation, which led to Germany's economic collapse in November of 1923. This gave way to the rise of the Nazi party led by Adolf Hitler, who would launch an unsuccessful coup against the German government for signing the Treaty of Versailles. Over the years, however, with the help of the Dawes plan

which declared that America would provide loans to the German government, Germany's 132 billion gold mark reparation debt was agreed to be reduced to 36 billion. In 1932, payments were suspended altogether to help Germany recover from the global financial crisis. Later, Hitler, would take power in Germany and undermine the treaty altogether, as the damage from the Treaty of Versailles had already been done, and Germany's subsequent remilitarization in defiance of the treaty's disarmament requirement for Germany was already in full swing, set to bring the world into another war.

If we fast-forward to the present circumstances of 2022 in which Russia and Ukraine is embroiled in a military conflict, we can see that there is some distinction and similarities in the backdrop that led to World War II and the backdrop that led to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. For instance, Germany's primary motive was to regain the territories ceded by Germany when they signed the Treaty of Versailles. Those territories were Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Alsace and Lorraine, and overseas colonies in China, Pacific and Africa. If we figure that re-expansion imperialistic motive into Putin's outlook, one would have to argue that Putin has a desire to revive the Soviet Union, which would require invading or annexing not only Ukraine, but also Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In contrast to this similarity, the distinction would be that the catalyst behind Hitler's desire to reclaim lost territories was largely rooted in the Treaty of Versailles, which decreed that Germany relinquish much of its territories. Putin, on the other hand, was motivated by the prospect of a foremost western neighbor joining a multi-national military bloc(NATO) that could supply it with nuclear weapons which could be aimed at Russia. In fact this was a flash-point for Russia's policy against Ukraine since 2014. It is possible that this revolting prospect could have motivated pro-Soviet era nostalgia that was used to justify the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014. Crimea was a gift to Ukraine from the Soviet Union General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev in 1954, a transfer that the Russian Federation tried to delegitimize. Unlike Germany, Russia was not under any serious longstanding financial constraints, that is, until after Russia invaded Ukraine in February of 2022. In this regard, we could compare Russia's invasion of Ukraine to Germany's military operations in World War I, with the ensuing reprisals against Germany under the Treaty of Versailles being akin to the international sanctions levied upon Russia after their invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Even in this case, the response to such sanctions by Russia may not mirror completely, Germany's response to the Treaty of Versailles. Russia is not being required to pay reparations to Ukraine nor being mandated to export resources to multiple nations. In fact, the opposite is being applied. Russia's export markets are

being stifled by embargoes, and Russia is not facing the threat of invasion if unable to make good on any sort of financial obligation levied upon them. Their military will also remain fully intact should they withdraw their forces from Ukraine, unlike Germany's after WWI, which was considerably reduced and rendered ineffective. This is why Russia's post-sanction approach may differ from Germany's post-Treaty of Versailles approach. If anything, sanctioning Russia is putting Germany back into an economic desperation that led to its assertive and defiant policies throughout the 1930's, which will much like Germany of the 1930s, compel Germany of the 2020s and beyond to remove all constraints placed upon them by western allies and take the same course of action the Nazis took in terms of remilitarization and self-determination, which is why this book foresees the euro usurping the US dollar as the world's reserve currency.

Russia and Germany's financial ties since World War I have been marked by periods of tension and harmony. After World War I, both nations found it rather easy to revert back to normalized trade relations, as the post-war period allowed both sides to prioritize their respective domestic problems. Within 3 years after the war ended, Russia(Soviet Union) and Germany signed the treaty of Rapallo in 1922. Even as Hitler came to power 11 years later with an anti-Bolshevik and anti-Russian platform, Germany and Russia nevertheless retained a cohesive trade relationship which gave Germany the much needed resources to remilitarize and launch an offensive against Poland in 1939. The economic arrangement between Germany and Russia led to the establishment of a NaziSoviet non-aggression pact in which the Soviets would take Poland from the east, while Germany would take Poland via west. This pact was later broken by Hitler, setting off World War II.

German and Russian relations just prior to the war were imperative to the national security and military apparatus of each nation. Thus the ratification of the German-Russian non-aggression pact allowed Germany to protract its military operations, and at the same time ease Russia's fear of a German invasion of the Soviet Union. Such was carefully crafted by Hitler, who used Germany's trade relationship with Russia to gain the trust that would buy him time and prevent Germany from starting a two-front war upon invading Poland. He also needed Russia's valuable raw materials to sustain the German war machine. These goals could only be achieved by establishing both a political and economic accord. Thus Germany and Russia would sign a trade agreement, which fostered the German war effort throughout much of the 1940s when Germany was invading much of western and central Europe. This economic agreement normalized relations between the Soviet Union and Germany and was more integral to the German war effort than the non-aggression pact was. It is often proposed amongst academic

scholarship that had France and England attacked Germany sooner after declaring war against Germany in 1939, the devastation from World War II could have been avoided. But we see in World War I, how the overlay supports the Napoleonic course of action regarding France's 1812 invasion of Russia, embarked upon because Russia was providing grain to England, whom the French were at war with. So in this fabric, one has to ask about France and England's outlook on Russia's empowerment of the German War machine by way of their export of raw materials to Germany, and if a course of action against Russia before 1941 would have been warranted by the Allied Powers. And does this perspective justify comparing Putin moreso to Napoleon than to Hitler since Putin's insistence on expansion would follow along the lines of Napoleon's—for the sake of cutting off another country's exports to an adversarial nation.

After Hitler rose to power in Germany, his ideological attacks on Bolshevism and Germany's subsequent break in political relations with Russia did not affect the overall standing of trade between Germany and Russia, even as Hitler tried to establish economic independence in Germany, encouraging policies that would force Germany to try and rely on their own resources for the sake of self-sufficiency, so that Germany would not require the imports from foreign nations during times of war. When this goal was discovered to be unfeasible, Germany strengthened their economic ties with the Soviet Union. In 1936, despite Nazi policy against communism and Bolshevism, Germany and the Soviet Union established a credit agreement which further consolidated their trade relationship. It provided Germany greater access to Russia's raw materials such as metals and oil. This proved vital to Hitler rearmament program since it was the case that before this agreement was established, Germany lacked the sufficient materials to sustain the arms effort. And it is likely that this may have been a source of resentment for the Nazis because without Russia, Germany could neither be economically self-sufficient nor militarily adept in terms of deploying its advanced weaponry. The 1936 credit agreement with Russia gave Germany the necessary tools for mobilization. In 1938, both Germany and the Soviet Union would review their economic circumstances. All in all, the establishment of this credit agreement would highlight a serious dichotomy between Nazi Germany's ideological framework and their foreign policy, which provides some backdrop to the bemusement that has arisen upon observation at how western nations have been able to condemn Russia for the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, but nonetheless continue to buy their oil and gas. This inconsistency has been a staple of geopolitics for quite some time, and was applied even during World War II. Furthermore, it was likely that the inconsistency and downright contradiction between Germany's foreign policy and their ideological dogma cultivated a growing

mistrust between the two nations despite the sustained economic arrangement. Perhaps the arrest of thousands of ethnic Germans living in Russia immediately proceeding Hitler's invasion of Poland could have been the impetus that set Germany on the course to breaking the non-aggression pact. We see this aspect of ethnic oppression influencing the policy of the Russian federation against Chechnya in 1999, Georgia in 2008, and Ukraine in 2014. The backdrop of those conflicts revolved around the treatment of Russian minorities in those countries. It is likely that Stalin's treatment of ethnic Germans in Russia in 1939 may have set Germany on a path against Russia.

Russia's raw material exports to Germany propped up Germany's ability to impose their will against western powers. It modernized Germany's military technology and gravely threatened the security of western and central European nations, as Hitler would often reinforce the need for living space. Germany's growing military stature and Hitler's rhetoric compelled nations like Great Britain and France to insist on taking a conciliatory approach in order to appease Germany. This was a far cry from their antipathy to the German state after World War I. We may see this played out between Russia and the United States, where the US after having embarked upon an antagonistic policy towards Russia since the Cold War, will be more compelled to apply conciliatory measures towards the Russian state after witnessing its bold aggression against Ukraine in 2022.

The conciliatory efforts applied by France and Britain towards Germany was never more apparent than at the 1938 Munich conference, where Hitler insisted on Germany's right to control the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia because of the number of ethnic Germans residing there. This is very similar to Russia's justification for annexation of nearby countries in eastern Europe post Soviet-era—the fact that a significant number of ethnic Russians resided in those areas. At the 1938 Munich conference, Hitler argued that a prerequisite for uniting Germans in the region and thus ensuring adequate living space would be through annexing the Sudetenland into Germany. This, Hitler asserted, would aid his goal of Lebensraum. In response, France and Britain practiced what is called appeasement, essentially allowing Hitler to expand without intervention on the part of France or Britain. After Hitler annexed the Sudetenland, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain came under scrutiny for this approach, which he argued was for the sake of strategy—giving France and Britain time to mobilize and prepare for military conflict.

Moreso than easing tension between Germany and its western counterparts, the Munich Conference provided an impetus to greater trade ties between the Soviet Union and Germany. Neither France or Britain sought any input from the Soviet Union on Germany's

annexation of the Sudetenland, which would have fostered more solidarity among France, Britain, and the Soviet Union, at least early enough to influence Germany's policy. But since the Soviet Union was left out, most likely because of how communism was viewed not just by Germany, but all of the west, Stalin decided that because of western appeasement towards Germany, the Soviet Union would be left alone in the event that Germany invade the country. So he decided to pursue a plan of improving political relations with Germany for the sake of delaying or even deterring outright aggression from Germany. As Germany began to acquire lands eastward, Hitler came to the conclusion that it would be in Germany's best interest to ally itself with Russia. This rapprochement between Germany and the Soviet Union allowed them to re-certify their economic ties after the Credit Agreement of 1936 expired in 1938. The arrangement allowed both nations to operate ideologically separate but economically entangled. As the Germans would continue their rearmament movement by acquiring raw materials from the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union in turn was able to benefit through access to Germany's military technologies. Back in 1920s, the Soviet Union secretly provided facilities to the Germans so that the Germans could build and test their arms developments in the Soviet Union in exchange for permitting the Soviet Union to access the blueprints for those technologies. In retrospect, western antipathy towards Russia has both exacerbated geopolitical issues and also curtailed potential solutions. We see this in the case of both the Munich conference and the Manhattan project, where in both cases, shunning Russia exacerbated the dangers arising from both the German war machine and later nuclear arms proliferation. This leads one to justify an argument that learning from history might involve early correspondence and input from Russia, as opposed to antagonism and provocation.

The diplomatic negotiations between Germany and the Soviets in 1938 and 1939 trod along a rocky road as both nations maintained a certain amount of distrust. The economic negotiations were conducted primarily by General Freidrich Schulenburg, who was the German Ambassador to the Soviet Union; Herr Karl Schnurre, the head of the Eastern European division of the Foreign Ministry; German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop; Soviet Chargé of Affairs Georgi Astakov; and Viacheslav Molotov, the Soviet Prime Minister. Schulenberg sent a memo to the German Foreign Office, outlining a plan to extend the trade agreement through 1939. The extension gave Germany continued access to Russia's raw materials. Nevertheless, even after being left out of the Munich Conference, the Soviets continued to reach out to western powers, which likely kept the agreement from being further extended beyond 1939. As Karl Schnurre, the head of the Eastern European division of the Foreign

Ministry was slated to travel to Moscow on January 20, 1939 to discuss the future of Soviet/Germany trade relations, his trip was suddenly canceled, and this had a negative impact on possible resolutions in the near term. Diplomats both on the German and Russian side believed that the other had some pretentious political agenda, and both sides insisted that political concessions be made before economic talks could resume. The Germans were suspicious of the Soviet Union's discourse with western powers. Nevertheless, the German diplomats continued reassuring the Soviet Union of their sincerity to continue with rapprochement and even agreed to see to it that anti-Bolshevik rhetoric would cease in Germany. Viacheslav Molotov, the Soviet Prime Minister, was concerned about Germany's motives and wanted Germany to run political negotiations concurrent with economic talks, and the German diplomats were adamant about gaining the trust of the Soviets. So this brief *ospolitik* measure of curbing anti-communist rhetoric in Germany was intended to satisfy Molotov's political demands. However, Schulenburg was concerned that the Soviets could use the political proposals to leverage Soviet talks with the western powers. This double-dealing aspect by the Soviet Union wore on Germany's ability to keep the Soviets interested in maintaining a trade and economic agreement. Nonetheless, German diplomats continued to urge the Soviet Union to make accordance with them on an economic agreement. But the Soviets, regardless, remained insistent on political bases being established. In June of 1939, Soviet Chargé Astakov met with Herr Dragonoff, the Bulgarian Minister, to discuss a potential non-aggression pact with Germany. The German foreign office, after being informed about the meeting, began putting together details for the pact. A meeting between Schnurre, Foreign Office Official Walther Schmidt, and Astakov and Evgeny Babarin, the head of the Soviet Trade Delegation, was called on July 24, 1939. At the meeting, Schnurre proposed a number of ways that Germany and the Soviet Union could establish an accordance. First, was through prioritizing a formal agreement to establish economic contracts, which he felt would cultivate better political associations. The second way to go about this, as Schnurre would assert, would be to normalize relations, which had already been underway prior to the meeting, as both nations attempted to discontinue the provocative rhetoric. The third step, Schnurre pointed out, was a complete effort to establish a meaningful political concordat. Even though Schnurre appeared to fulfill Molotov's request and ease his concerns with those proposals, the Soviet Union still remained apprehensive about accepting the plan. The Soviets were steadfast in opting to continue relations with both Germany and the western powers. By July 28th, however, the Soviets decided to accept Schnurre's plan for German/Soviet accordance. Molotov wrote to Soviet Chargé Astakov: "Political relations between the USSR and

Germany may improve, of course, with an improvement in economic relations...if the Germans are sincerely changing course and really want to improve political relations with the USSR, they are obliged to state what this improvement represents in concrete terms...we would, of course, welcome any improvement in political relations between the two countries.”

Despite Molotov’s statement, the Soviet Union continued to navigate diplomatically between Germany and the western powers for the purposes of ensuring Soviet security against a potential German attack. For this very reason, the German representatives had become anxiety-ridden about confirming an economic and political accordance with the Soviet Union. Hitler had already laid out his plans to attack Poland and wanted to confirm that the Soviet Union would not intervene. It was likely that the lack of certainty about this from Germany’s end was due to Soviet oscillation between Germany and the western powers. This may have been one of the major factors that led to Hitler breaking the non-aggression pact in 1941, believing that because the Soviets were corresponding with the west, the west would persuade the Soviet Union to intervene against Germany. A non-aggression pact was of such deep concern to Hitler that he would send Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop to conference with Astakov on August 3rd 1939. Ribbentrop ensured Astakov at this meeting that Germany would expound on the details of the pact if the Soviet Union confirm their intent to establish a relationship with Germany. He asserted that the pact could only be successful if both sides were equally committed, and he also insisted that the Soviet Union cut ties with the west, along with the Soviets promising not to get involved in Germany’s affairs. Once again, the Soviet government stalled on providing a decision to the German representatives, and continued to corroborate with the western powers. An Anglo-French delegation met with the Soviet government on August 10th, 1939 to discuss the future of Soviet/western relations. When the talks yielded little to no results, the Soviet Union pivoted back to Germany and confirmed a desire to officially establish a pact with the German state. Schnurre and Astakov met a number of times in Moscow to lay out the tenets of the contract as it related to the economic accordance. Ribbentrop and Molotov would put together the components of the non-aggression pact. Molotov continued to express the need for certain contingencies that would have to be met for the agreement to work. He believed that Germany and the Soviet Union needed to confirm a trade and credit agreement, a non-aggression pact, and the establishment of a secret file that would outline the interests and expectations of each nation. By August 16th 1939, Germany stated that it was ready to sign a nonaggression pact after the conclusion of an economic agreement. Subsequently, on August 19th, Schnurre and Babarin would sign the economic portion of the agreement in Berlin. The agreement

extended the trade relationship initiated by the Credit Agreement of 1936 up unto the mid-1940s and also increased exponentially the amount of goods to be traded. The contract laid out the terms of what each side was expected to contribute, terms which were largely unequal, as the Soviet Union was to provide a higher portion of goods than Germany. The Soviet Union was allocated 200 million Reichsmarks for the purpose of acquiring those goods which were agreed upon. While this credit seemed at first glance to favor the Soviet Union, all it did was offset the debt accrued by the Soviets under the 1936 Credit Agreement, which totaled 200 million Reichsmarks. The treaty nonetheless allowed the Soviet Union to trade their raw materials to Germany in exchange for German machinery and arms, which strengthened the capabilities of the Red Army and also helped reverse a declining Soviet industrial economy. In this sense, both sides enjoyed a mutual benefit of improving their respective arms industry. In other aspects, the Germans benefited to a significant degree since they were able to trade outdated machinery for vital raw materials from the Soviet Union. The outdated technology were often weapons used in World War I, along with coal exports. Germany was also allocated 200 million Reichsmarks to purchase Soviet goods. The economic deal allowed Germany to attain materials that Germany lacked on its own soil, materials such as oil, iron, food, lumber, cotton, and manganese, all of which were used to develop and enhance the German industrial economy and war machine. Despite having to trade away manufactured goods and hardware, Germany retained much of the advantage from the agreement. Bartering was the primary vehicle for trade under this pact since removing the necessity of hard currency allowed for a more efficient transfer of materials, and allowed Germany to designate the hard currency for other aspects of Germany's re-militarization program. Despite the advantages Germany attained from this agreement, German representatives continued to press the Soviet Union for more concessions, such as a delayed payment schedule in exchange for Germany helping the Soviet Union build factories in the Soviet Union over a term of 5 years. Thus new negotiations would take place between October 3rd 1939 and February 1940. The aftermath of these meetings led to a railway agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union, and provided a means for Germany to evade Britain's blockade of German goods, while also allowing Germany to increase the amount of goods it could trade with the Soviet Union. This new arrangement provided to Germany an increased amount of oil, cotton, phosphates, iron, platinum, and lumber. The Soviet Union, under this agreement, agreed to purchase for Germany other materials and metals from foreign countries. In this regard, the Soviet Union was acting as a third party buyer for Germany and thereby providing them access to foreign markets

which Germany had been restricted from participating in. Moreover, a new payment schedule was agreed upon, one which allowed Germany to repay the Soviet Union for deliveries over a 27 month period. Paying the Soviet Union at a later date enabled Germany to spend more money on advancing their arms technology and war machinery.

Shortly after the signing of the economic agreement, the nonaggression pact was signed on August 23, 1939 in Moscow. This agreement, in contrast to the economic agreement, was publicly advertised to show the nature of the relationship between Germany and the Soviet Union. The non-aggression pact was not intended to be an alliance, but only an agreement in which both sides would decide to remain neutral if the other was attacked. Such a measure was applied to mitigate the chances of military conflict between the Soviet Union and Germany. The non-aggression pact was designed to last 25 years. A third aspect of the German/Soviet accordance was the formulation of classified file which would detail how Germany and the Soviet Union would allocate their respective spheres of influence. This provided a buffer zone between Germany and the Soviet Union and further reduced the chances of hostilities between both nations. The Secret Protocol, as it was called, is what led to the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland and the German invasion of western Poland. The ratification of the non-aggression pact prevented Hitler from starting a two-front war, as adhering to the Secret Protocol placed the area of Poland invaded by Germany in September of 1939 under the jurisdiction of Germany, leaving the rest of Poland under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Union. This would ease Stalin's concerns about a German invasion of the Soviet Union, and at the same time provide Germany access to the Soviet Union's raw materials. It is certainly arguable that had Stalin did the opposite—cut ties with Germany in the late 1930s and maintain a correspondence with the western powers, the Soviet Union may have attacked Germany after Germany would have invaded Poland, and thus prevented the escalation that occurred during World War II. Another factor in the case of Soviet alienation of Germany would be a far less extensive arsenal of weapons in the hands of the German war machine, owed to the fact that such an arsenal was contingent on Soviet export of its raw materials to Germany. Germany, without importing oil from the Soviet Union, would not have been able to develop its armaments, nor sustain its war effort since planes, tanks, and other components of mechanized warfare require adequate oil availability. Germany has never been self-sufficient when it came to oil production, for they could only provide 33% of their domestic need, never-mind military needs. Without Soviet oil, the German army could not conduct blitzkrieg nor fight for prolonged periods of time. Hence why access to Russian oil was critical to Germany's sustenance militarily and

domestically. This has not changed even as of 2022, as roughly 98% of oil consumed in Germany is imported. 34% of those imports come from Russia.

The other critical material that the Soviet Union supplied to Germany was metal, which came in the form of pig iron, chrome, and manganese. These enabled Germany to develop a hardened steel framework for the various weapons and artillery they had in their arsenal. Prior to World War II, 65% of Germany's iron was imported. Minerals such as chrome, manganese, and steel were normally obtained from South Africa, but after Britain formed a blockade to deny Germany's access to those minerals, Germany was left having to rely on Russia. The lack of metals and iron in Germany made it imperative that Germany orchestrate trade deals with the Soviet Union. Without such, Germany would not have been able to conduct any significant military operations. 500,000 tons of iron supplied to Germany by the Soviets in 1939 provided Germany with enough iron reserves to sustain their military for the first 3 ½ years of the second world war. Other forms of metal like manganese were completely absent in Germany, as Germany contains almost no deposits of it. During the re-militarization program prior to World War II, Germany imported 100% of the manganese from the Soviet Union. Manganese was important for the Germans because of its ability to deoxidize steel, which allowed Germany to revamp degraded artillery and restore older machinery, both of which would be traded to the Soviet Union for other minerals. One of the only metals that was ubiquitous in Germany was aluminum, which was normally mixed with other imported minerals to develop logistical equipment like planes. Germany's ability to make full use of resources to maximize economic viability was second to none. Metals and Oil from the Soviet Union allowed Germany to become the advanced military powerhouse it became in the 1930's.

On one hand, it can be pointed out that the Soviet Union aided the German war machine, allowing Germany to subdue much of the western world. On the other hand, one can point out that Germany's export of arms to the Soviet Union during the economic agreement established in the late 1930's provided the Soviet Army with the capability to defeat Germany in World War II.

Other resources which helped foster the German war movement was food and textiles, which Germany is self-sufficient in producing. Germany was able to domestically produce enough food to keep Germans from starving during the war, and keep soldiers from having to resort to a rationing system. Nevertheless, Germany had looked to import grain from the Soviet Union in order to keep food supply at pre-war levels. The Soviet Union exported 1 million tons of grain to Germany, which maintained Germany's food levels high enough to keep them from rationing. The textiles like cotton exported to

Germany from the Soviet Union allowed Germany to maintain the manufacturing of clothing and blankets. By 1941, the Soviets had faithfully honored their part of the agreement, and the Germans were pleased about this. The Soviet Union had been faithful to the detriment for their own needs. Only once in 1940 did the Soviets suspend the economic agreement, but this was because Germany had briefly defaulted on their payments. Germany would resume payments them shortly thereafter. The manufactured goods that Germany provided to the Soviet Union allowed the Soviets to scale up their arsenal of military equipment. Prior to 1940, Stalin was very aware of how weak the Soviet military was compared to the German one, and the Soviet Union allocated very little of its budget to defense spending between 1936 and 1939. Stalin knew how important it was for the Soviet Union to take steps to mitigate the chances of a German invasion of the country. Hence the reason the Soviets established both an economic and military agreement with the Germans in 1939 and 1940. But despite amassing a powerful military of its own by way of German arms exports to Russia, the Soviet Union would have trouble gaining control over the much smaller nations of Poland and Finland, 2 nations which Russia considered within its sphere of influence. Adhering to the Secret Protocol which called for Germany and Russia to secure their sphere of influence in their respective regions, the Soviet Union invaded both Poland and Finland. The Soviet invasion of eastern Poland took months, compared to the German occupation of Poland which only took them around 3 weeks. This further validated Stalin's outlook of how superior Germany's armed forces were compared to the Soviet's. The lack of efficient communications between Red Army commands in Ukraine and Belarus complicated the Soviet mission to occupy Poland. In 1939, the Soviet military was still a work in progress and much equipment was still lacking. However, Stalin insisted on mobilizing the Red Army for the partition of Poland, but the mission would take a month as weak lines of communication and untrained fighters would stifle the Soviet advance. Nonetheless, the Red Army would continue their offense conquering the Latvia and Estonia before moving into Finland. The Soviet invasion of Finland is strikingly similar to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine in terms of Russia's difficulty in securing and taking control of a much smaller nation with a much smaller military force. Finland was once part of the Russian empire and Russia considered the country to be part of its sphere of influence. Up onto that that time, the Soviet Union had conveyed the desire to bring Finland into the bloc. Initially, the Soviet Union offered to engage Finland diplomatically by requesting that Finland allow them to access their resources and ports. But when the Finnish President refused, Stalin feared that the Finns had already mobilized to fight the Red Army, which led Stalin to launch an all out pre-emptive naval, air

force, and ground assault on Finland on November 30 1939. Despite the onslaught by the vastly superior Red Army, which outnumbered the total population of Finland, the Finns were able to resist the Red Army and retain control over their home territory for some time. Stalin believed that he could force the Finnish army to scatter by attacking Finland from multiple sides. However, the Finnish troops were dispersed along the border, which cut off Soviet access to incoming weapons reinforcement, and this kept the Red Army from securing an advantageous position against the Finns. This prolonged the war because the Finns were initially confident they could win, but after a few months, the Finnish command realized that they could not fight forever. After making numerous requests to the allied powers for military aid, the Finns were left alone as the allies refused to bring help. The war reached a stalemate. The Finnish resistance eventually broke down amid increasing Red Army troops, and the Red Army would finally take control of the country. In March of 1940, the Finns signed the Moscow Peace Treaty, which provided the Soviet Union access to the Finland's ports and bases in exchange for allowing Finland to retain their sovereignty. After being unable to occupy Poland and Finland in a relatively quick manner, the Soviet military ramped up their defense spending and militarization at frantic speed. In June of 1940, they then set their sights on Romania, in particular Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Under the Secret Protocol, the Germans acknowledged Soviet interest in Bessarabia, which came under Soviet occupation after the Soviet Union gave Romania an ultimatum to either evacuate the Romanian military and civil administration from Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina, or face a Soviet invasion of the country. Adhering to the advice of German diplomats, the Romanian government would yield to the Soviet demands and cede Bessarabia and northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union. The German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joachim von Ribbentrop was concerned about how a military conflict would affect the fate of the 100,000 ethnic Germans living in Bessarabia. Ribbentrop also acknowledged that Soviet interest in Bukovina was not part of the Secret Protocol. Hence, it becomes apparent that such overreach by the Soviets, along with Germany's concern about ethnic Germans living in Bessarabia gave the Germans the justification to break the non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. Hitler would later state in a conversation with Finland Field Marshall Carl Mannerheim that Germany could not allow the Soviet Union to take the petroleum wells in Romania, noting that without it, there would be no way for the German army to maintain their arsenal of tanks, planes, and various other artillery. Hitler believed that Russia would have attempted to seize all of Romania and annex the petroleum wells, a prospect that would have shattered Germany's war effort. In this conversation, Hitler is also astounded at how the Russian labor

forces could amass 35000 tanks at the start of the war. Official estimates on the number of Soviet tanks came to be around 26000. Nevertheless, it was clear that the Soviets salvaged every advantage they could garner from the 1939 economic agreement with Germany. Russia's labor force proved itself extraordinary in quickly making use of the machinery imported from the Germans. The factories that were under construction in the Soviet Union with the help of the Germans in the late 1930s were—within 2 years—as a result of Russia's labor force, mass producing thousands of tanks. Here is the transcript of Hitler conversation with Carl Mannerheim about Russia's military strength and speedy arsenal build-up. This is taken from <http://www.feldgrau.ne>:

Unidentified (Hitler?): "...a very great danger, perhaps the gravest one..." Hitler: "(unintelligible)...we ourselves were not completely sure of this, how monstrous this strong armament was."

Mannerheim: "We had not suspected this, in the Winter-War, in the Winter-War we had not suspected this, of course we had a (one unintelligible word) that they were well armed, but so as they had been in fact, and now there is no doubt at all what they had planned ('was sie hatten in ihrem Schild')"

Hitler: "It is evident...evident. They have the most monstrous armament that is humanly conceivable ('menschendenkbar')...so... if anybody had told me that one state...(footsteps)...if anybody had told me that one state can line up with 35.000 tanks (Hitler uses the word 'tank'), I had said 'you have gone mad'..."

Unidentified: "Thirty-five..."

Hitler: "35.000 Panzer (now he uses the word 'Panzer')...we have more than, we have at the time more than 34 Pan...thousand Panzer destroyed. If somebody had told me this to...had said: you...if one general of mine had declared, that a state here had 35.000 tanks, I had said, Mister ('Mein Herr'), you are seeing everything double... or tenfold, this is crazy, you are seeing ghosts...I had not thought this possible...If somebody had told me that...I have told this just before, we have found industrial plants...one of this in (unintelligible: Kalanuskaja?) for example, that was under construction two years ago...and we had no idea...and today there is a tank production facility that...that...in the first shift a bit over 30.000 and in full development should have employed more than 60.000 workers...one single tank production facility...we have occupied it...a gargantuan facility...lots of workers who nevertheless live like animals and such..."

Unidentified: "An amazing region..." Another Unidentified

(Hitler?): "An amazing region..."

Mannerheim: "If one considers that they had for 20 years...more than 20 years...25 years nearly, the freedom to arm themselves... and expended all, all for armament...only armament..."

Hitler: "May I tell you...(couple of unintelligible words)...president of state, I have not suspected this, had I suspected this, my heart would have felt even heavier...but I had made the decision all the more...because there was no other possibility. It was obvious to me, already in winter 39/40 that the (Invasion of the Soviet Union?) had to come. But I had the nightmarish pressure ('Alpdruck') of the West on me, because a war on two fronts, that would have been the downfall...we, too, would have been crushed. We see that better today as we could realize it back then...we would have been crushed...our complete...originally I wanted in autumn 1939 to...I wanted to carry out the West Campaign, only that continuously bad weather we had, that has hindered us. Our whole armament was...it is a 'Good Weather' Armament ('Schönwetterbewaffnung'), it is very capable, it is good, but it is unfortunately a Good Weather Armament. Indeed, we have seen it recently here in this war, naturally all of our weapons are styled ('zugeschnitten') for the west. And we all had the conviction...that was until now (mumbling) ...it was just our opinion, since the oldest times...one cannot wage war in wintertime. And we have...the German tanks... the German tanks have not been put to the test to perhaps prepare them for winter-war, but test-runs were made to prove that one cannot wage war in winter. It has been a different starting point. In autumn 1939 we have been facing the question...and I wanted yet to attack under all circumstances...I had the conviction that we would finish France within six weeks...but there was the question whether one would be able to move...and it was this continuously rainy weather...and since I know this French region very well...and I, too, could not discount the opinion of many of my generals, that we, probably, would not achieve this verve ('Élan'), that we would not be able to make full use of the tank force ('Panzerwaffe'), that we would not be able to make full use of the Air Force, too, with the front air fields, because of the rain...I knew northern France myself, I have been soldier for four years during the Great War...and that was the reason for this delay. Had I finished France in the year 39, the world history would have went a different way, but this way I had to wait until the year 1940...and that was not possible until May...the 10th of May was the first fair day, and I have attacked on the 10th of May at

once. I have given order on 8th of May to attack on the 10th and... then there had to be...had this giant transposition of our divisions from the west to the east to be made... (unintelligible: the first occupations in...?) then we had this task in Norway...during the same time came...came actually, I can say that today, this very great misfortune upon us, namely the weaknesses that had arisen for Italy, firstly the North-African situation, secondly with the situation in Albania and Greece, a very grave misfortune. We had to help now. That, at a blow, meant for us first of all again a rending of our Air Force, a rending of our tank units... while were preparing our tank units for the east, we had, at a blow, to commit two divisions...two complete divisions, it turned out to be three at the end...and had to replenish very great losses there...it were bloody fights that have been fought out in the desert... naturally all of this has been missing here in the east...and...it was not imaginable any other way that the decision, which has been inevitable. I had a talk back then with Molotov, and it was absolutely obvious...Molotov left with the decision to begin the war, and I dismissed him with the decision to beat him to it, if possible... because, the demands this man was making were obviously aiming at ultimately ruling Europe...(the next sentence is whispered and largely unintelligible, something like 'I have [...] to dispute this, is downright ridiculous [...]')...Already in...in...in autumn 1940 there was constantly this question for us: shall one ...err...risk a sundering?...I have advised the Finnish government back then... err...to negotiate and...err...to gain time to...err...err...to handle things divertoric ('die Sachen divertorisch zu behandeln'- I have to admit that I never encountered the word 'divertorisch' before, but it seems to derive from the latin 'divertere' – to deflect, akin to the English 'divert'), because I always had one fear: that Russia would suddenly assault Romania in late autumn, and would annex the petroleum sources...and we would have been not finished yet in late autumn 1940. If Russia had occupied the Romanian petroleum sources, Germany would have been lost... (unintelligible one or two words, something with 'need?')...with... with, with 60 Russian divisions this thing could have been arranged; back then we had in Romania no task force yet, the Romanian government has turned to us very lately...and what we had would have been ridiculous indeed. They only would have needed to occupy the petroleum sources, I could not have started a war in September or October any more with our arms, that was indeed impossible...we also had the deployment of our troops in the east not prepared in any way, the units had to be consolidated in the west first, the armament had to be brought in order...because, naturally, we had also have made our sacrifices during the West Campaign. It would have been impossible to line up before the Spring of 1941, and if now the Russian, back then in the autumn of 1940, had occupied

Rumania, and had annexed the petroleum sources, then we would have been... err...helpless in the year 1941...We had...have the large German production, but the amount the Air Force alone is consuming, the amount our tank-divisions are consuming that is something quite monstrous. It is a...a...a consumption surpassing all imagination. And without the afflux of four to five million tons of Rumanian petroleum, we would not be able to wage the war.... (Unintelligible, a few words, some of them 'had to let'?)..And this worried me greatly, hence my attempt to overcome this time through negotiations, until we were strong enough to oppose this extortionate demands...the demands were sheer extortion, it were extortions, the Russians knew that we were helpless, that we were tied in the west, they could extort everything from us...and only on the visit of Molotov...then I have offhandedly declared them, that we could not accept the demands...these many demands...Basically with this the negotiations were...abruptly ended...(a few unintelligible words)...there were four points, the one point concerning Finland... was the freedom to protect themselves from the Finnish threat...I said: 'You do not want to tell me that Finland is threatening you?...He said, well, in Finland one would act against the friends of the Soviet Union...this would be a society... they would be continuously persecuted, and a Great Power could not accept being threatened from a small state regarding its existence.' I said: 'you... your existence is not threatened by Finland, is it? You are not trying to tell me that your existence is threatened by Finland?' (In the background someone says: 'ridiculous.') Well, there also would be a moral threat to the existence of a Great State, and what Finland was doing would be the mor...a threat to the moral existence...And I said to him, that we would not be able to accept another war on the Baltic Sea as passive spectators. Then he asked me how our positions would be regarding Romania, we had made a guarantee after all... whether this guarantee would be directed against Russia as well...I said: 'I do not think that it is directed against you, because you do not have the intention to assault Romania, don't you? Tell me...we never have heard that you have the intention to assault Romania, you have always stated that Bessarabia belonged to you, but you have never stated that you wanted to assault Romania.' He said that he wanted to know precisely..." (End of Audio-Recording)

To this day, dependence on foreign oil has been mainstay for the German economy. Perhaps only a revolting prospect should Germany attempt to displace itself from the security umbrella of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and attempt to reassert its pre-1945 geopolitical independence. As a member of NATO, Germany has had the luxury of spending less of its budget for military purposes, which lent Germany the status of being the number four economy in

the world, superseded only by Japan, China, and the United States. After Germany was defeated in World War II, the country was occupied by Soviet and US forces. Some ideas about what should happen to Germany immediately begin to be discussed. It was proposed that Germany be broken up into smaller states to prevent it from threatening its neighbors again. Other believed it would be more beneficial to have Germany maintain a strong economy, all while being incorporated into a united Europe. Germany had only been a sovereign nation state since 1871, largely due in part to Prussia's military strength. Also, the United States proposed dividing Germany into 3 sectors, all geared to agriculture, as opposed to heavy industry. This plan was offered by US Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau in 1944. President Herbert Hoover, however, was more concerned about the humanitarian implications of jeopardizing Germany's ability to feed its citizens as well as incoming refugees coming from the east. Much of Hoover's fear stemmed from the way hunger gave way to the Bolshevik revolution during and after the first world war. Hoover did not want a repeat of such a scenario post World War II, and he also believed that starving the Germans would only compel them to drift into the Soviet Union's sphere of influence and take up communist ideologies. Moreover, the main component that the allies wanted to eliminate from Germany was militarism and Nazism. Prior to World War II, Germany's economy could be regarded as a form of organized capitalism where big corporations would be led by large board members who would collude for the purposes of increasing profits and stifling any incoming competition. Germany was known for protecting its big businesses, such as arms manufacturer, Krupp and chemicals company, I.G. Farben, both of whom profited substantially from the Nazi arms industry. The allies considered this consortium aspect in Germany's economy to operate much like a cartel. Hence, why the allies were adamant about breaking up this amalgamation of private economic power, as well as demilitarizing Germany. The allies believed that the arms movement in Germany was largely maintained and supported by the influence of a wealthy consortium of private business owners. Furthermore, it was not just demilitarizing and decartelizing that the allies set out to achieve for Germany, the central core intent was de-nazification of the country. This denazification intended to remove all Nazis and sympathizers from all aspects of German life, including politics and government. (We see Russian President Vladimir Putin take a page from this post World War II scenario to justify his invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which he described as the attempt to denazify the country's government.) It was also agreed upon by the allies that Germany must pay reparations, namely to France and the Soviet Union.

Chapter 6: Germany's Economic Miracle

In 1945, the Allies began the process of deciding how Germany would be divided. The US occupation zone was in the south. The British occupation zone was in the west and the north. The French occupation zone was in the south and west. And the Soviet occupation zone was in central part of Germany. The eastern part was controlled by Poland, where the Soviets had that same year installed a pro-Soviet government. So technically the eastern and central part of Germany would come under communist influence. This division of Germany into 4 zones was confirmed at the 1945 Potsdam conference. Also, those territories that were annexed and conquered by the Nazis before and during World War II were effectively reassigned back to those nations that originally ceded the territory to the Germans. Germany under Adolf Hitler invaded and annexed Austria, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland and Yugoslavia. The allies approved of detaching German lands east of the Oder–Neisse line, and placing them under the control of the Polish and Soviet administrations. This was done to compensate the Polish for some of the eastern portions of Poland that were lost to the Soviet Union when the Soviet Union annexed eastern Poland in 1939. Those eastern territories east of the Oder–Neisse line would no longer be recognized as Allied-occupied territory. The remainder of defeated Germany would be governed jointly by US, British, French, and Soviet forces. Berlin, in and of itself, would undergo the same 4-way split among the allied powers. Despite these cooperative efforts, the divergent economic policies pursued for US, British, and French controlled territories and for Soviet controlled territories would ultimately split Germany into 2 states—East and West Germany and initiate the Cold War. The French, British, and US controlled areas were seeking to establish a framework of private business and democratically established governance. The Soviet zone, on the other hand, was looking to establish single party rule and state controlled industry. This inability to find common ground reached a tipping point when the French, British, and US controlled areas, which had become known as the tri-zone, decided on June 19, 1948 to issue a new currency called the Deutsche Mark (West German Mark) to replace the Reichmark, which was still being used throughout all of Germany. The Deutsche Mark, however, had quickly circulated throughout Berlin and became the standard currency there. The Soviet zone responded in kind by issuing, shortly thereafter on June 23, 1948, what was called the East German Mark. The very next day, the Soviets blocked West Germany's access to Berlin, refusing to lift the blockade until the non-Soviet zones agreed to accept the East German mark as legal tender for all of Germany. Access to Berlin via rail, road and water was cut off until May of 1949. The western

sectors, however, got around the blockade by using aircraft to bring in supplies to their respective zones in Berlin. The fiasco led to the formal creation of 2 independent states in Germany.

The formulation of a constitution for the West German state began in 1948 when the western allies committed to giving governing authority back to the Germans. In July of 1948, the western allies issued the Frankfurt documents, which called for a layout of parameters for developing the constitution, which was expected to be drafted by the Germans themselves. The framework was to involve a strong democracy that left room for centralized authority and basic rights. It was made clear that this formulation did not entail West Germany's complete sovereignty from allied control, especially in terms of foreign policy, trade, and national emergencies. The parameters attempted to appeal to the basic tenets of most political entities in West Germany at the time, namely the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats. The Social Democrats desired a more centralized state, while the Christian democrats insisted on maintaining influence on cultural and school issues. Much of West Germany firmly believed that Church should be integrated with State, while individuals be granted the freedom to choose their faith. This move to develop an official West German state affirmed the reality of Germany becoming split, but this did not concern West German citizens since this constitution was termed "Basic Law", which thus gave it a temporary notion. This "Basic Law" was developed in 2 phases. The first phase was when officials from the 11 state (Lander) governments called a meeting at the old Herrenchiemsee castle in Bavaria to discuss and develop a draft constitution, establish the legal framework, and draw the lines between what comprised state jurisdiction and what comprised federal jurisdiction. The second phase was the development of a Parliamentary Council, whose members were appointed by the state governments. The Parliamentary Council consisted of representatives from the major political parties, all appointed by the state governments and vetted by the allies after a rigorous denazification screening. The Council consisted of 70 delegates; 5 of which were non-voting, and they were tasked with developing West Germany's new "Basic Law." On May 23, 1949, the Parliamentary Council formally announced the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) with the city of Bonn designated as the provisional capital. This new republic was guided by a legislative assembly called the Bundestag, meant to serve as the most powerful constitutional body intended to operate within the parameters of what the "Basic Law" defined as basic rights and basic principles of human dignity. To enforce this requirement, the Parliamentary Council established the Constitutional Court, which would review grievances that German citizens had with the state. Under the "Basic Law", the powers of the president were limited and

facilitated from the Bundestag. Many on the right considered this limitation of the powers of the president as a reinforcement that Germany was disqualified from tending to their own security as it related to domestic and foreign affairs. Some even railed against the idea of a system that forfeits the power of the executive and awards it to the political parties.

The Federal Republic held their first elections on August 14, 1949, with nearly 15 political parties participating in the event. The Christian Democrats and the Free Democrats forged an alliance and would come out victorious, as Konrad Adenauer would be elected Chancellor, and Theodor Heuss of the Free Democratic Party would become West Germany's first president. Together, with the economics minister, Ludwig Erhard, all three would set Germany on the course of economic recovery by following a social market economic strategy. Business was left in the hands of the private sector, while the market would be allowed to decide prices and wages. Just prior to the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany, the new currency, the Deutschmark (West German Mark), issued by the tri-zone caused unemployment to rise since the Deutschmark initially raised the cost of labor, causing employers to cut their workforce and wages for the sake of keeping expenses minimized. However, with Marshal Aid provided to Germany by the US, the Deutschmark was strengthened and legitimized, which opened the door to foreign investment. Another factor that cultivated this economic miracle was the fact that profits were increasing as wages continued to remain low. At this time, many of the incoming refugees moving to West Germany from East Germany were both educated and highly skilled, and this influx had kept the demand for work higher than the supply of jobs. This is attributed to the fact that much of the communist elements in West Germany were suppressed, and those who propagated Marxism were shunned, both from work and society as a whole, which kept workplace militancy to a minimum. Also, labor unions which were crushed by the Nazis remained subdued even after World War II under reconstruction. Another element is that at this time in Germany, it was easy for businesses to exploit exiles, who were also highly skilled and educated. All things considered, a cheap but highly skilled and educated workforce is likely the main catalyst that triggered West Germany's economic miracle. As the West German economy continued to expand in the 1950s, demand would follow. Germans, after having gone through a war and the destruction of their country, were eager to consume and acquire goods that they hadn't enjoyed since before the war. Things from furniture to clothes to cars to TV sets were all consumed by the West German public, whose standard of living had begun to increase substantially. Some of the factors that may have kept the economy from expanding further was the denazification efforts which would oftentimes remove top

technical expertise from the workforce.

It was discovered that the economic boom of the 1950s produced a side-effect of neglecting the elderly and disabled. Throughout the timeframe of the first Federal Republic government, pension issues and life insurance policies were largely ignored, owing to the fact that the war had gobbled up much of the private pension and life insurance funds. The policy that the FRG had set up for pensions was very ineffective, and the Christian Democrats did not have the urgency to apply reforms. As a consequence, the Social Democrats would look to seize the example of the government's lack of action on pension reform and use that to their advantage at the polls. The move prompted Adenauer to push a pension reform bill through legislation in 1957, which provided retirees, unemployed, and disabled with 60% of their average annual income which would be adjusted to currency wage levels, all for the sake of ensuring that the standard of living for retirees, disabled, and unemployed would not fall below the rest of the population in West Germany. As a result of this action by Adenauer, the Christian Democrats would win the 1957 election. And by the end of the 1950's, West Germany would turn into a social welfare state as a result of this amalgamation of free market policies with social democratic values.

East Germany would quickly respond to the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany by establishing the German Democratic Republic(GDR). Much like West Germany establishing the Federal Republic of Germany to serve and lean in the direction of the economic backdrop of the west and its free-market values, East Germany established the German Democratic Republic to integrate eastern economic communist systems. The Soviet economic system was antithetical to the western system in that the Soviet communist system relied on command rather than market direction. Thus the Soviet occupiers of East German territories would remove anticommunist elements and people from power and replace them with pro-Soviet, pro-communist Germans. The state would become dominated by one party, the Socialist Unity Party, made up of German communists who would look to emulate the governing structure of the Soviet Union. The GDR nationalized banks and major corporations, as well as land reform....all intended to stifle the formation of economic class division. The communists in East Germany would often justify the implementation of communism in Germany by pointing out how Communism's very founders, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, were both German. Many of the German communists had been exiled by the Nazi Party during Hitler's reign, and quite a number of them were sent to concentration camps. After World War II, they returned to East Germany to assist in the rebuilding process. Many of them had no experience in public administration or municipal planning, nor any knowledge on how to

go about wielding power. The German communists were motivated by an idealism of what Germany should become, and within this hope, they had no concrete blueprint on how this ideal was to come to fruition. Much of their actions were predicated on moves by the west. Even still, most Germans had no ambitions to establish a separate state. When the German Democratic Republic was announced, along with the proclamation of building it as a socialist state, a number of detractors predicted that the attempt would prove futile and that the GDR would only last a few months before collapsing. Numerous attempts were made to sabotage the newly established republic. Throughout its existence, the GDR was marred by endless attempts to undermine its economy and legislative procedures. West Germany's economic recovery was constantly promoted to reinforce the inferiority of the GDR's attempt at socialism. The increasing number of Germans fleeing East Germany for West Germany for better salaries stifled the aims of the GDR, and many East Germans used the availability of employment in West Germany to leverage demands that they receive higher salaries in East Germany. This is the reason why the Berlin Wall was built in 1961—to deter emigration of East Germans to West Germany. Another factor that allowed the FRG to undermine GDR's economic growth was due to both West Germany's economic expansion and the fact that East Germans migrating there were automatically regarded as citizens of the FRG. They would be provided all the necessary paperwork and an easy path to securing a house and job. Many of these migrants from the GDR to the FRG were white collar workers—doctors, dentists, and engineers. Thus, the outflow of skilled labor from the GDR curtailed its ability to foster economic growth. During the first 20 years of the GDR's existence, it had increasing difficulty in establishing and sustaining diplomatic ties with countries outside of the communist sphere, and this was because West Germany placed a lot of pressure on nations that were looking to recognize the GDR or establish diplomatic relations with them. The FRG's stance maintained a refusal to continue relations with nations that would try and establish ties with the GDR. However, Egypt, which was receiving aid from the Federal Republic of Germany, became the first non-communist country to recognize the German Democratic Republic. This was certainly to the dismay of the FRG, and when the GDR Prime Minister planned to visit Egypt after the recognition, a number of western nations closed their airspace and prohibited the flight from traveling to Egypt over their territory. As a consequence, the Prime Minister was forced to get there via Yugoslavia or boat. This is an example of how pettiness could arise during the Cold War. Such tensions made it increasingly difficult for the GDR to maintain its trading links with West German firms, who were under heightened pressure to sever ties with the socialist/communist state. The GDR was economically reliant on

these trading relationships, and the abrupt termination of contracts suppressed the GDR's ability to recover from World War II. Isolating East Germany is different than isolating Eastern Europe, in that Germany itself is reliant on imports for raw materials, where eastern European countries like Russia sits on a vast variety of raw materials, allowing them to be less dependent of acquiring minerals from elsewhere. Without adequate supply chain of raw materials, East Germany's attempt to establish its manufacturing industry was largely deficient. Further difficulty the GDR encountered came about when in 1951, the FRG imposed a steel embargo and banned trade between West Germany and East Germany. This would prove to be devastating since one of the main materials that Germany was abundant in was blocked from reaching East Germany. That material was coal.

East Germany had since the beginning of the post-war era made numerous efforts to retain some semblance of peace and harmony and coexistence. Even after the GDR was created, Stalin would request that a treaty with the Federal Republic be formulated—an effort that was rejected by FRG Chancellor Adenauer since the FRG refused to recognize the GDR. Once it became obvious that the United States was going to remilitarize West Germany and incorporate them into NATO, the dynamics of the relationship between east and west would take on considerable change. In 1955, the FRG established the Bundeswehr, which was to serve as West Germany's official armed forces. East Germany, in 1956, established the Volksarmee to be the official armed forces of East Germany. At this juncture, Stalin's policy of peaceful accordance between East and West Germany was off the table.

The GDR is credited with being able to maintain a more egalitarian society devoid of the class privilege that had been a staple in pre-war Germany where the top sectors of society had been dominated by the wealthier citizenry. In pre-war Germany, women were largely confined to domestic and low-salary employment. The GDR looked to change this since when it comes to gender equality, communism has been the best of the best ideologies. The GDR took steps to counter class and gender division by ensuring an equal pay system, in which higher level positions were not granted significantly more pay than lower level positions. This aspect of communism comes under criticism from free-market advocates who believe that such an arrangement deters innovation and effort since the result or reward takes less into account than western capitalism —education, skill, and output. Nevertheless, the GDR continued to push this form of equality, leading to East Germany becoming the most egalitarian society in Europe at the time. Even the housing situation in terms of architectural quality accommodated a mix of working class people, with little difference in the standard of living between lower tier

employees and upper tier workers. This helped mitigate the possibility of evoking the class tension that typically arises in western societies. Still and all, the social market economy and the higher salaries of West Germany would often lure away top talent from the GDR. For the mainstream sector of society, however, a certain confidence would permeate, a confidence in the sense of security offered by the economic structure of the German Democratic Republic. It was such that fear of things like unemployment, homelessness, lack of access to healthcare and social service were largely absent, and it had become nearly impossible for a person living in East Germany to fall elusive to the social safety net. Employment and housing was guaranteed, and so was healthcare and other services. The catch 22 to removing the fear arising from the potential of experiencing various forms of destitution was that people had more time to dedicate their energies towards social and mental pursuits, which would at times disconcert the state. But overall, there was a sense of duty for the more gifted to pick up the slack left by the less gifted, and at the same time allow the entire entity, whatever it may be—the class, the work environment, the group—to revel in the achievement. In contrast to the western capitalistic outlook, the socialistic perspective in east Germany was less about the individual and more about the good of society. As a result, social integration was much more embedded into the society of east Germany and its soviet-style communism. There was no gender discrimination, people did not feel as though they needed to compete with each other. The old was not set against the young. This was much unlike capitalist countries, where demographics that display a comparative advantage in a certain endeavor can be exploited to the detriment of society's sense of fairness.

Another positive aspect of GDR communism was that communities were much safer since poverty and isolation was quelled by the fact that most people felt a sense of responsibility for happened in their environment. Hence, why people living in the GDR had little to fear in terms of their own communities. People were able to stay outside during late hours without fear of being harassed or victimized. And if these things did occur, they would be very rare incidents. Also, advertising in the GDR didn't involve the exploitation of women, and children were the responsibility of the entire community, not just the single family. It was common for neighbors to take a concerted interest in the welfare of the child, and because of this, things like mental illness and antisocial behavior became less prevalent as most children in that type of society felt cared for. The architectural structure of residential areas in Germany, both east and west, were made up of blocks of flats, but in the GDR, these flats would be owned by the entire community or coops, and the residents that lived in those flats consisted of a diverse variety of workers from

handymen to teachers to train operators to academic professors, all living next to one another. Thus one's living situation was not a determinant to one's value to society. The responsibility for maintaining the residential spaces and the surrounding public areas fell upon everyone's shoulders, and residents would often take turns carrying out various tasks from lawn-care to snow removal, and the compensation received would be held in a common fund that was supplemented with money received from recycling, a popular practice in the GDR. And much of this was not just for the sake of the environment; it was also largely due in part to the fact that raw materials were scarce in Germany, and people needed to conserve whatever they could get their hands on. Furthermore, this practice did accommodate the later climate change movement by expanding to help promote urgency about global warming and the need to engage in environmentally friendly practices. In the GDR, recycling was very simple, as one could go to a recycling station and exchange items for compensation, which oftentimes motivated more people to take up recycling. Residential organizations would also get involved in the recycling movement and use the money built up in the common fund to enhance the residential community by constructing spaces for various pursuits like hobbies, storage, or parties. In some cases, residential organizations would pay out a percentage of the common fund holdings to each tenant.

Women's rights were outlined in the GDR constitution drafted in 1949, and was geared towards preventing marriage from undermining the rights of women to assist society at the local and national level. The Gesetz über die Rechte der Frau Law guaranteed financial assistance for mothers and made it illegal for employers to terminate a woman's employment due to pregnancy. The law also granted both single and married mothers the same civil rights, and mandated the construction of facilities for children, faculties such as kindergartens and nurseries. These accommodations allowed women to pursue various occupations and at the same time achieve financial independence. That being so, women in the GDR projected a more confident image compared to women of the west. In the GDR, the husband trying to impede the career ambitions of his wife were grounds for divorce, unlike in the FRG where men were the sole owners of property and married women were only allowed to work if they were granted permission by their husbands. In the GDR, women with children could work full-time. In the FRG, they could only work par-time at most. The GDR had programs in place that were specifically geared for the advancement of women. In fact, most of the modern feminist demands in western societies were already embedded in the communist framework. In the GDR, abortion was legal and birth control was ubiquitous. Maternity leave was generous, paying 90% of the woman's salary, and as soon as the baby was born,

the family would be awarded 1000 marks.

Socialism in the GDR also lived up to its billing as the prototypical system that centered around the rights of workers. In fact, the rights of workers in the GDR were a top the list of priorities for the socialist state since the Communist Manifesto, written by Marx and Engles, was based on worker liberation from the exploitative capitalist system. Under Communism, the proletariat was to be the pillar of society, and work itself was upheld as the highest honor, regardless of what one's vocation was, whether it be a lower paying job or higher paying job. All of it was considered as a necessity to the sustained functionality of society. Thus, in the GDR, the workers were regarded as the driver of society since it was they who produced the goods and services that the society required. Under communism in the GDR, workers in mines and steel mills who put their health and safety on the line were compensated with better salaries and healthcare than white collar workers who engaged in less hazardous work. Work became a person's birthright under the GDR; even those with criminal backgrounds could secure employment in the socialist system. It was all-inclusive, and employers were tasked to train everyone and give everyone a sense of self-worth, even the disabled. The job security that socialism guaranteed made the workplace more relaxing and managers less authoritarian. This is was in contrast to many places of employment in western societies where the threat of termination or verbal abuse is used to drive output. In the GDR, however, one had to engage in serious delinquency in order lose their job. This delinquency included behavior that was intended to oppose the state, which was also taken very seriously, and the reprisal would often be termination or demotion. Moreover, when it came to voicing grievances in the workplace, employees garnered a significant advantage since in doing so, they would not risk losing their jobs. Thus, employees could point out things they felt needed to be changed at work without serious cost. This fostered an environment that was open to change and improvement and job satisfaction. Strikes did occur sometimes, especially when changes applied upset the workforce. But these were not often and every effort was made to keep worker sentiment from reaching that point. It was also the case that when someone was fired from their job, they would almost immediately be offered alternative employment. The drawback of this system is that it was not in itself a proponent of idleness. Everyone who could, had to work, and the GDR had no system of offering unemployment benefits. Work was central to life and workers were involved in the company's core issues. Trade Unions were established under the supervision of the state and ensured the continued well-being of the workforce by way of social service availability. Employers, by law, were responsible for ensuring that their employees had access to the basic social safety net programs such as

childcare, healthcare, housing, and other accommodations. Many places of employment had medical facilities on site, making it easier for ill workers to access medical attention in a timely manner, lowering the mortality risk that arises from late diagnoses of terminal illnesses. Even though housing was in short supply in the GDR, employers were instrumental in helping employees obtain housing, and major companies were often allocated multiple housing units to provide to their employees in need of residential services. Some places of employment were also equipped with childcare accommodations such as kindergarten and nurseries, provided to help those employees who had children. The workplace also provided meals and recreational facilities to their workers.

Due to the fact that the GDR did not have the financial backing that West Germany had with the Marshall Plan, their only option for development became the implementation of a command economy backed by centralized state supervision. This is what socialism offered, and the state's five year plans for the economy helped initiate the GDR's heavy industry sector. Shipyards, gas and iron production plants, a new oil refinery were a testament to the GDR's version of economic progress. While not on the level of economic growth as the FRG, the GDR nonetheless achieved self-sufficiency and had one of the most successful economies among socialist countries. Industries that revolved around machinery employed a million people in East Germany, and these industries comprised of highly skilled engineering sectors, and much like pre-war Germany, the GDR had become a top industrial nation and a major exporter of high-level machinery to eastern European countries. Much of the GDR's relative success to other eastern bloc nations is credited to public ownership of industry and the state's central planning process. Over 90% of the assets in the GDR were publicly owned. Yet even as a socialist society, the state managed to make room for private ownership in which the state would have a stake in the company. A private sector did exist in the GDR, but it was relatively small. However, in terms of how much it contributed to the GDP, it was quite significant as the 176,800 private entrepreneurs in the GDR produced an output that made up 2.8% of the GDP. The private sector was made up of artists, writers, craftsmen, retailers, and farmers.

Profits garnered by publicly owned companies were distributed based on the needs of the society, and a large portion was reinvested back into the economy. In the 1960's some of those aforementioned private individual enterprises would join with the publicly owned sectors in what was called VVBs. Together, they would work on research and development for the sake of advancing the sector as a whole. In this regard, the central planning aspect of socialism would try to adopt and integrate some aspects of privatization in way that benefited the society without undermining the socialist structure.

Much like the command economy in the Soviet Union, the state would set the production goals, but the VVB would determine the amount of financing the company would need. If the goals were met, bonuses would be distributed, and such prospects would help incentivize workers to become more efficient.

The GDR leadership faced a conundrum in implementing its economic policy. In order to ensure the satisfaction of the proletariat by ensuring the availability of goods and service and offering social programs that compensate for other factors that could impede productivity, the GDR found that the level of productivity in the GDR was not enough to pay for those goods and services. This left the GDR having to rely financially on the FRG, leading to increased borrowing and less reinvestment at home. The GDR was hoping that advancing technology would solve this conundrum, which is why they poured large sums of resources into innovation groups. The state's expenses did not equal its production, and many of the economic experts in the government of the GDR became concerned about a debt crisis coming about from an increased reliance on the west. But the Socialist Unity Party, however, disregarded this concern, even in light of the fact that none of the countries in the western world would accept the GDR's currency, the East German mark, in return for their products. Much of the west wanted hard currency. This left the GDR having to try and find hard currency in order to meet this demand. So in 1971, after the Ospolitik agreement via the FRG and GDR's signing of the Moscow Treaty which ruled out the use of military force between East and West Germany, the GDR began encouraging westerners to travel to the East Germany, but the catch was that they would purchase East German marks at a 1:1 ratio, meaning that 1 East German Mark would be equal to one unit of hard western currency. This was set up in order to generate more income for the state and in a way, let westerners subsidize the GDR. Visitors would come to the GDR to visit family and would often times come bearing gifts, one of which would be hard currency from the west. Being aware of this factor, the GDR would open up shops selling popular western merchandise at higher prices. They also expanded their level of credit with the FRG, and would leverage the release of political prisoners for western loans. The GDR and FRG began negotiating directly with each other on the sale of goods. All of these things likely deterred the GDR's impending financial collapse. The cost to the GDR was that it would go into deep debt to West Germany, a country it long considered its main nemesis. The lack of raw materials as well would impact the East German economy. Not to mention the housing issue. In the GDR, only 5% of the worker income was relegated to rents, which left no surplus that the housing association could invest into property repairs and improvements. The GDR deciding to defer such expenses led to numerous buildings depreciating in value and structure. The

continued operation of coal plants led to environmental issues such as air and water pollution. And updated equipment was unable to be acquired, leaving workers having to rely on outdated equipment and spend a good deal of time repairing them, which cut into productivity and the quality of goods. Also living standards for the elderly population in the GDR dwindled. All things considered, much of Germany's historical deficiencies in raw materials had come to back to stifle the GDR's efforts at self-sufficiency, a long-standing but elusive goal of the German state. The growing debt accumulation by the GDR to the west restricted the policy goals of East Germany. The increased economic reliance on the FRG hindered the ability of the GDR to crush dissent within their own territories since human rights violations could lead to the FRG cutting their financial aid to the country. Thus the GDR would no longer push a policy of shooting people that were trying emigrate to West Germany.

Tension between the Soviet Union and the GDR began to grow as the Soviet Union began finding new customers for their oil exports. After the 1973 oil embargo in which OPEC refused to sell oil to nations supporting Israel during the Yom Kippur War, the Soviet Union was afforded the opportunity to develop a lucrative energy trade with the west. Experiencing financial problems of their own, the Soviet Union began cutting their oil exports to the GDR, and increasing them to the FRG. And this was likely due to the low quality of goods being produced by the GDR for those previously mentioned reasons like workers being stuck with outdated equipment and having to spend more time repairing them as opposed to producing quality goods. This reduction of energy exports from the Soviet Union had negative systemic implications for the GDR, and GDR officials expressed their fear to the Soviet Union that less oil would undermine the GDR economy and destabilize their country. But nevertheless, the Soviet Union remained adamant about reducing oil exports to the GDR, which led to heightened tensions and further reductions and the fact that those factors would lead the GDR into having to rely more heavily on financial aid from the west. This was another conundrum. Even though the Soviet Union was developing its oil trade with the west, they still insisted that East Germany limit its correspondence with the FRG. When Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, planned to attend a summit with the Chancellor of the FRG, the Soviet Union forbade the meeting. In this regard, the GDR for the sake of its economy was forced to rely more on the west because the Soviet Union decided to limit its exports to the GDR, but at the same time the Soviet Union would attempt to discourage the GDR from further developing its relations with the FRG. The United States was still on the Soviet Union's radar as a result of the ongoing Cold War. When the North Atlantic Treaty Organization(NATO) expanded its western military bloc to include West Germany in 1955,

the Soviet Union followed a similar course by establishing its own eastern military bloc called the Warsaw Pact and integrated East Germany into the alliance.

Tensions between the Soviet Union and East Germany would ease temporarily when Mikhail Gorbachev became its General Secretary in 1985. At the outset, Mikhail Gorbachev sought to establish western-friendly reforms in the Soviet Union, even adopting some free-market principles in an attempt to revive the Soviet Union's declining economy. He also considered East German communism to be the example for the economies of eastern Europe. Despite the financial problems taking place in the GDR, Gorbachev noted how much more efficient it was than other socialist countries in eastern Europe. However, within a short time, the Soviet Union under Gorbachev would cut deliveries of oil and raw materials to East Germany, and the GDR would respond by becoming contrarian to Gorbachev's reforms. One such reform of Gorbachev was glasnost, which essentially gave citizens in the Soviet Union the right to exercise free speech. The GDR feared that this would spread to East Germany, and in 1988 the government there doubled down on suppressing free speech. They also banned the Soviet journal, Sputnik, from East Germany. These measures were met with hostility from not only the public, but also from members within the Socialist Unity Party who long considered the Soviet Union as the basis for its existence and also the model that East Germany was to emulate. General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party, Erich Honecker, had come to power on a pro-Soviet platform, so neither the public nor his constituents understood his sudden anti-Soviet outlook. Much of East Germany had bought into Gorbachev's willingness to invite change, but the same could not be said for Honecker. Honecker was also concerned about Gorbachev's move to assert "freedom of choice" for the Soviet Union's client states, which implied a hands-off approach, a revolting prospect for nation states such as the GDR that were reliant on the Soviet Union militarily. Even so, some in the Socialist Unity Party welcomed this idea of policy freedom because it would give them more flexibility. Another dilemma would arise. Since the fact of being militarily dependent on the Soviet Union made it easy for the GDR to adhere to a standard that only reinforced its communist paradigm, the notion of nonintervention pushed by Gorbachev only served to bring the GDR further into the sphere of western influence since it was the case that the GDR was financially reliant on the FRG and the west. Many in the Socialist Unity Party began discourse about the possibility of a united Germany. And of course, Honecker was certainly alarmed at this prospect. Unsurprisingly as a result of Gorbachev's lenient doctrine for eastern Europe, dissent that had formed all throughout East Germany during the decade of the 80s and were now being practiced by an increasing number of regular

citizens, set the stage for the 1989 East German Revolution. Throughout the 80s, millions of petitions were sent to the GDR by regular citizens who were demanding the right to leave the country, and in 1989, the GDR would pass a new emigration law that would adhere to the Helsinki accords—a contract established in 1975 between the Soviet bloc and western nations to agree on human rights and basic freedoms—and at the same time reduce emigration from East Germany. Despite the effort, thousands of East German citizens applied to vacate the GDR. Gorbachev doing away with the Brezhnev Doctrine, which affirmed Soviet intervention in eastern European states, gave way to independence movements throughout eastern Europe. Under Gorbachev, countries in the Soviet bloc were allowed to vote for other parties besides the communists during elections. Such became the case in Hungary, who would shift from communist rule to a multi-party democracy, allowing them to break the barriers established between them and neighboring Austria. The result was that Hungary would seek closer ties with the west. This allowed citizens of East Germany to use Hungary as a means to escape to West Germany. They would simply travel to Hungary, then to Austria and make their way into West Germany from there. Hungary, nevertheless, adhered to their agreement with the GDR to extradite emigrants back to East Germany. However, West German Chancellor Kohl would intervene and release East German emigrants being detained at the West German embassy in Budapest, Hungary, and allow them entry into West Germany. This had a ripple effect, as many more East German citizens would attempt to make their way to West German embassies in Poland and Czechoslovakia and seek asylum. Looking to save face, the GDR General Secretary Honecker made a deal to permit the emigration of those seeking refuge at West German embassies if the east German citizens would return to East Germany and be formally expelled. This had little effect as mass emigration began taking place in East Germany, leading to the GDR cutting off free transport to Prague, Czechoslovakia in order to stop it.

The GDR refused to adhere to Gorbachev's voting reforms, and in 1989, the local elections throughout the country still consisted of one party, the Socialist Unity Party, with citizens only being able to vote for a unity candidate. The Soviet Union, Poland, and Hungary had already applied reforms to their voting policy. Furthermore, many local organizations were getting concerned about a violent revolution as the GDR secret police continued taking action against a growing dissident movement. Nevertheless the dissident movement continued to grow and number of them would establish various independence groups. A domino effect ensued, and officials began walking away from the Socialist Unity Party as it was clear that without Soviet intervention, the GDR was not equipped to quell a dissident movement of hundreds of thousands of people. After Honecker was

removed from power, the Socialist Unity party made a last ditch effort to try and honor demands for a new travel regulation, and at the same time deter mass exodus of GDR citizens from East Germany. Attempts to dialogue with the new autonomous social organizations only further diminished the credibility of the party in asserting its singularity in East Germany's affairs. The other problem was the GDR's longstanding debts to the west which had been accrued over a 20 year period, a problem that GDR refused to resolve with spending cuts. The major flash-point for the dissident movement had been travel regulation, and when the GDR had decided to address the issue by introducing a new travel regulation effective immediately on November 9, 1989, one that would allow— according to the GDR press spokesperson's statement—for GDR citizens to leave the German Democratic Republic through any border crossing, citizens in East Berlin began gathering near multiple checkpoints. Despite no formal plans to open the border, guards at the checkpoints lifted the traffic barriers and the people flooded thru. The fall of the Berlin Wall set in motion the reunification of East and West Germany.

It had been clear that much of the factors that have economically plagued Germany for decades repeated themselves during the time of the Soviet-backed East German state—The German Democratic Republic. While the GDR had one of the most efficient implementations of socialism in eastern Europe, the lack of raw materials there and the constant emigration of technical expertise to West Germany had ultimately placed an expiration date on the governing body. At the same time, one can look at the example of both pre-war and post war Germany and see that Germany's number one commodity was it own ethnic German demographic. Exportation of German scientists and engineers to Russia, to West Germany, and to the United States played a central role in the technological advancement of those nations.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, discourse about how East and West Germany should go about re-unification became a major talking point. There were some concerns, however. The United States for instance was somewhat worried about how a re-unified Germany would evaluate its place in NATO since was formed mainly in part to stifle Germany's future military ambitions. Others felt that after the horrors perpetrated by Germany during World War II, Germany itself did not deserve to re-unite. Meanwhile, the FRG would keep an eye over the situation, still aware that East and West Germany had been ideologically divergent for quite some time. Nonetheless, the FRG Chancellor Kohl continued to help facilitate East German migration into West Germany, just as he would continue to assert West Germany's goal of a united Germany. Yet this was met with some pessimism by other western countries, particularly France and England whom had not forgotten about the horrors of 2 World Wars

perpetrated by the Germans. Israel was also leery about the thought of a unified Germany, fearing that it would imperil the Jewish people. However, most Germans living in both East and West Germany supported reunification. In the mean time, the GDR would attempt to establish some reforms, but when the FRG gave them an ultimatum to allow free elections or risk being denied financial aid, the GDR gave in and held elections in March of 1990 which were won by the conservative Alliance for Germany, bringing an end to socialist rule in East Germany. The Alliance for Germany would form the interim government in East Germany until reunification of East and West Germany.

In December of 1989, delegates from France, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union met at the Allied Control Council Building in Berlin to discuss an independent Germany. Everyone agreed that Germany should be allowed unification, independence and self-determination, and that the existing borders in Europe be respected. The only point of contention was concerning the German military. Gorbachev initially objected to Germany remaining a part of NATO and the EC, and predicated his agreement on the overall matter to Germany remaining neutral. Many in the Soviet government considered the East German military as integral to the Soviet's armed forces. But when economic turmoil and unrest began to take shape in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev decided to concede on the Germany/NATO issue and accept the condition that Germany remain in NATO. The West German government immediately set aside 12 Billion marks to help facilitate the reunification process, which required the construction of housing and the vacating of over 100,000 Soviet Union soldiers back to the Soviet Union. In September of 1990, Germany, the US, the Soviet Union, France, and Britain signed the Two plus Four Treaty which ended allied occupation of Germany and set in motion its official reunification. The next step was currency unification. The East German mark, the currency of GDR was still in circulation but declining in value, and the West German mark(the Deutschmark) was spreading eastward. Another thing was that many east Germans were still migrating westward. Economists at that time believed that the way to stop the endless migrating would be by unifying the currencies and also restricting east German access to west German social benefits. It was believed that by restricting benefits to east German migrants in West Germany, the West German government could influence east Germans to be more insistent on remaining in place in East Germany. On the currency unification issue, however, some wanted for the two currencies to be valued at a 1 to 1 exchange rate, meaning one West German mark would equal one East German mark. This was proposed for the sake of preventing citizens in East Germany from having their savings wiped out. Ultimately, it was agreed that a 1:1 exchange rate would apply to a

certain amount of savings, while a 1:2 exchange rate would apply to other amounts. This agreement was ratified in May of 1990 and officially in place in July of 1990.

The two German states unifying had been the first time such an amalgamation had occurred. Never before has a capitalist society merged with a communist society to become one. A number of issues were initially encountered. For example the historically low productivity rates of East Germany compared to West Germany lowered Germany's overall labor market performance after the two countries united. Only 2 years after unification, the industrial productivity plummeted 73% from the levels reached in 1989. These challenges persisted even as the influence of eastern Europe and Soviet Union over East Germany was quickly dissipating. Just prior to the unification, West Germany began taking steps to privatize the GDR's economy. One way of attempting to achieve this involved taking over a Trust Agency in East Germany called Treuhand, which was initially formed by the GDR for the purpose of reallocating East German firms to new management. This was the state's way of facilitating privatization. The Trust would take on the assets and liabilities of roughly 8000 East Germany companies and sell them to private individuals who were bidding on the firms. This measure, even after East Germany was drifting away from communism, was met with disdain by some who retained a socialistic outlook. The CEO of this Trust would end up being assassinated at his home by a sniper in 1991.

Another issue of unification that came to the forefront was the issue of property rights. The vast expropriations of property imposed by the East German government under the GDR socialist state from 1949 - 1989 made it difficult for the FRG to figure out who the original owners of the property were. Millions of claims were made and confirmed, nevertheless. And this would ultimately scare off investors looking to get into the real estate market. There was also the wage issue which was exacerbated by the fact that the conversion rate of the East German mark to the West German mark kept production costs elevated, and wages dispersed would exceed what the corresponding productivity had warranted. Thus, West German companies would try to integrate their new East German markets by simply establishing more production facilities in the western part of Germany as opposed to the eastern part. But it wasn't just the wage issue that deterred west German companies from expanding their operations into East Germany. East Germany had been plagued with deprecating and degraded infrastructure, along with energy shortages, which affected communication lines such as telephone service. A number of east German power grids were shut down as a result of this energy shortage, which posed a safety issue. Many of the streets and railways in East Germany were in such bad condition, that they had to undergo

serious renovation, and many of them had to be rebuilt. This was also the case for the autobahns. All of these issues underscored a serious delay in the unification process of transitioning East Germany from a socialist state to a free-market economy, and it became the case that measures which were enacted to speed up the process could be something that would ultimately obstruct long term economic growth. It was believed that an efficient transition could only happen if the expected initial fallback would be allowed to occur, as opposed offering compromises to keep such events from happening, compromises that could create permanent burdens on the structure of the economy. At the same time, though, there is a dilemma here that German economists had to contend with, such that allowing disruptions could result in the type of devastation that could impede and even jeopardize both the economic and political stability needed for setting in motion a smooth transition. Upheaval could further exacerbate the exodus of East Germans from East Germany to West Germany. Trying to find a middle ground on dealing with these issues was usually more expensive, and trying to cut the cost of the transition by allowing certain outcomes to happen was something that presented possible obstruction to the whole process altogether.

The conservative model welfare state that existed in the FRG prior to the unification was much more sustainable because it was not burdened by the prospect of increased costs that integration with East Germany brought about. These costs involved matters pertaining to fixing infrastructure problems in East Germany, dealing with the migration issue—West Germany needed to find a way to incentivize people to stay in East Germany, and the labor issue—labor market productivity in East Germany was inferior than what it was in West Germany. West Germany's financial system was one that offered social welfare programs, but based on worker output, collective taxation of wage earning employees, and GDP. This type of system is contingent on a labor market comprised of high productivity and high employment. This is was the case in West Germany, but not East Germany and created some problems in the unification transition process. In West Germany, when it came to insurance, workers normally allocated part of their salary for taxation, while their employees would match their contribution. The sum would be pooled into a national pool that would handle meeting insurance claims. The East German economic backdrop of high unemployment and low productivity combined with increasing demands for social benefits was a drain on the German economic system, since in that case of high unemployment in East Germany, worker contributions would also be lower. West Germany was thus forced to take up the slack amid this lack of taxed contributions and increased insurance claims among the less productive demographic of workers in Eastern Germany. The increasing costs of accommodating this declining

contribution/beneficiary ratio into the German economy pressured the West German government to enact reforms on welfare spending. By 1995, the unemployment rate in East Germany had grown significantly and was 2 times higher than it was in West Germany. Not to mention that the number of welfare recipients had also increased to exceed the number of wageearning workers nationally. By the year 2000, social welfare spending comprised of 32% of the national GDP, and 50% of the GDP in East Germany. Germany exceeded the deficit limits established in the Stability and Growth Pact, which was part of the Maastricht Treaty—an agreement between a number of European countries to cooperate politically and economically. This agreement is what has come to be known as the European Union(EU). It developed out of the European Commission. The Stability and Growth pact that was established concurrently with the formation of the EU was aimed at setting limits on how much European countries in the EU can spend. According to the agreement, the budget deficit could not exceed 3% of the GDP, and the national debt could not surpass 60% of the GDP.

Regardless of these issues, the transition of unification did get rolling by way of a determined East Germany. The Treuhand had been made up of employees from West Germany and was endowed with such responsibility, that it was basically the governing body for East Germany. Much of the investment into East Germany was by west German investors, and those non-German firms that did invest into eastern Germany were companies that had subsidiaries in West Germany. The state of East Germany was of such a condition that it became very difficult for Treuhand to lure foreign investment into that region. Consequently and unexpectedly, East Germany's economy had declined considerably in the ensuing years after reunification; unemployment jumped past 3 million, and industrial production plummeted. In 1991, overall production in East Germany comprised just a mere 8% of West Germany's total production output that year.

The transition process was largely facilitated by west Germans, and for that very reason, many of the firms in East Germany were just subsidiaries of west German companies. And these subsidiaries followed the same company models of their parent company in the west, in terms of ownership and management. The assets of banks in East Germany were assumed by west German banks, whom would place their own western bank reps in management and board positions at the banks in East Germany, allowing western firms to maintain control over the operations there. The Treuhand was set up in this manner, where many of its employees would be from banks in West Germany. The initial problems associated with a transition of unifying East and West Germany into one sovereign state slowed down the pace of economic growth. Very little investment flowed into East Germany during the early stages of unification. In fact, capital inflows to East Germany

only made up 1% of the national GDP. And much of this inflow was relegated simply to investors purchasing the companies there. It was clear that a lot more was required for not just investing in ownership, but also renovating and rehabilitating those firms. But investors were cautious, buying the firms and making sure that the company would be functional in terms of productivity before committing more investment towards wages and renovations. Many investors backtracked on their commitments to the east German firms. Because much of West Germany's expenditures were allocated to infrastructure and social benefit payments to the unemployed, disabled and elderly in East Germany, less would be available for investment into further economic development. The infrastructure projects certainly helped in terms of job creation but did little to contribute to overall growth of the economy. A short-term fallback was noted when it came to why. It was presumed that the time dedicated to training employees cut into the time employees would spend seeking employment. Moreover, in terms of spending, it was concluded that the German government spent 350 billion Deutschmarks on the economic, monetary, and unification process in East Germany over the course of the first 3 years. Between 1992 and 1995, Germany would spend nearly 850 billion Deutschmarks on East Germany. When taking into account the population in East Germany, such expenditure could have paid every person living in East Germany 50,000 Deutschmarks. This underscores just how adamant and insistent the west German government was about unification.

During the first stage of unification, West Germany's economy improved somewhat, largely in part to the demand created by people coming into the country from eastern Germany. Unlike East Germany's economy, which declined significantly immediately after unification, West Germany's GDP rose roughly 4.6% in 1990. That same year, the cost of living managed to remain steady even as wages increased in some industries. Employment rose during that year, and unemployment dropped, and this was likely due to the influx of workers coming in from East Germany filling vacant job openings. The unemployment rate would thus decline to 7%. Between 1990 and 1991, nearly 400,000 people from East Germany were commuting to their jobs located in the west. Another factor in the GDP growth was that many east Germans wanted to acquire goods from West Germany, goods they considered superior to the ones produced in East Germany. Many in East Germany also deposited their money in West German banks, increasing the inflow of capital there, which was another positive influence on the economy in the west. Despite these aspects which were conducive to economic growth in the western part of Germany, the Bundesbank had become concerned that the stimulus of capital flowing into the west from the east would pose an inflationary risk. There was also heightened worry about increasing

government deficits as a result of infrastructure spending on east Germany. These prospects made it clear to the banking industry in western Germany that interest rates would have to remain elevated in order to mitigate the risk of high inflation from West Germany's rapid growth rate and money supply increase. This fear of price hikes led the banks to increase short term interest rates sharply between 1991 and 1992. The average short term interest rate spiked from 7.1% in 1989 to 8.5% in 1990, before rising to 9.2% and 9.5% in 1991 and 1992 respectively. It wasn't until 1993 that the Bundesbank allowed rates to decline, during which time they would fall to 7.3%. The bank was confident that the inflationary pressures were held in check by that point. Following these monetary policy measures, the rate of growth in western Germany began to slow down; in the last quarter of 1992, West Germany's economic growth rate was barely 1%--a far cry from where it was in the first quarter of 1991 at 4.2%. Comprehensively in 1992, the growth rate would total 1.5% from the year before, indicating a slowdown of the growth rate by 3.7%. In eastern Germany, the growth rate there would fall below analyst expectations. It was anticipated that 1992 would bring at least a 7% growth rate, but the official numbers turned out to be just 6%. Both East and West Germany saw an increase in unemployment in 1992; the total unemployed in Germany that year was a record 4 million people. West Germany made up two-thirds of that number, while East Germany made up one-third. But nevertheless, the national GDP for all of Germany that year had risen above 3 trillion Deutschmarks. East Germany contributed 7% of that. The slowdown of the growth rate continued into 1993, going negative -1.2%. After having cut short term rates for over a year, Germany's economic growth rate would begin to steadily rise on average roughly 2% a year from that point. Unemployment also began to drop, albeit slowly and gradually.

Ultimately, the unification process had come with a large trade off requiring West Germany to invest around 2 trillion marks for the purpose of developing the east German economy, transitioning it from a socialist state to a social market economy. The costs of rehabilitating the infrastructure there made up a considerable portion of that 2 trillion mark investment. But time would indicate that eastern Germany could never catch up with West Germany's economic efficiency. Even by 2011, the results showed that the growth rate was still trailing that of West Germany's. Unemployment remained much higher in the east, a result that many economists blamed on West Germany's subsidization of eastern Germany's societal infrastructure. The complacency in eastern Germany is considered to have been brought on by excess expenditures by the west German government on unemployment benefits, welfare, and job security measures in the east. The economic miracle that began shortly after World War II in West Germany had dissipated by the

early 2000s. The costs of reunification which ultimately slowed down the German economy from the pinnacles it reached during the economic miracle led to Germany becoming ridiculed as “the sick man of Europe.” In 2003, the German economy underwent a brief recession, during a time when the economic growth rate was only averaging 1.2% annually between 1988-2005. High unemployment continued to plague the east German economy regardless of the government spending on social programs there. In 2008, the worldwide financial crisis impacted Germany’s GDP, causing it to decline. But as it turned out, Germany’s economy recovered faster from the 2008 financial crisis than any other nation, and this momentum would carry over into 2010 and beyond as global demand reinvigorated Germany’s export markets, which would account for half of the German GDP.

The euro began as a virtual currency in 1999, after having been proposed over the past few decades prior. It was a longstanding goal for the European coalition movement since the 1960s, and later for the EU in the 1990s. The Maastricht Treaty came about in 1993 with the very intention of establishing an economic and monetary union for EU member states by 1999. The UK was excluded from this goal, as well as was Denmark. By 2002, euro notes and coins entered circulation and quickly took precedence over the other national currencies that were circulating at the time. In retrospect, discourse about a monetary union for European countries goes back to the League of Nations, proposed by Woodrow Wilson at the end of World War I. Even back then, a unified currency under what was called the Latin Monetary Union was proposed for France, Italy, Belgium and Switzerland. Later, policy makers would devise a way to formulate a similar framework. The first initiative on this matter was conducted in 1969 by the European Commission(EC), whose goal was to express a necessity for Europe to coordinate on economic and monetary cooperation. Shortly thereafter, a conference among the European Council at the Hague discussed ways to reduce exchange rate volatility. This meeting led to a proposal—which would be published in 1970 by Pierre Werner, who was the Prime Minister of Luxembourg—that advised for a centralized macroeconomic policy making-framework which would fix the fluctuation of European currencies and make the movement of capital less restricted. When the US took the US dollar off the Bretton Woods Gold Standard in 1971, the widespread currency devaluation that followed curtailed the goals of monetary unity set forth by the European Commission. But in 1979, the European Monetary System(EMS) was established and fixed exchange rates to an accounting unit called the European Currency Unit(ECU). The purpose was to counter exchange rate fluctuations and inflation. The European Monetary Cooperation Fund would later come out of the EMS. In 1988, the European Council developed a plan

for monetary unity which was supported by France, Italy and the European Commission. European Commission President Jacques Delors was then asked in 1989 to head up a committee of central bank governors that would be tasked with formulating the concrete methodology towards the development of an economic and monetary union (EMU). His draft put forth a blueprint for the EMU in three phases, one which would establish the European System of Central Banks(ESCB)--an institution that would oversee the creation and implementation of monetary policy. The first stage of this blueprint was liberalizing capital movements in the European economic community by getting rid of exchange controls. This was followed by the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 which established an agreement on monetary union, setting the path for a single currency for EU member states, except the UK. This single currency was slated to go into effect by 1999. At first, Germany was somewhat apprehensive about parting ways with the DeutscheMark. France on the other hand approved the treaty, while the UK and Denmark decided to abstain. In 1992, the UK's currency, the pound sterling, had briefly collapsed and was forced to withdraw from the EMS.

The second phase of Delors's plan started in 1994 with the European Monetary Institute, formed to phase out the European Monetary Cooperation Fund which was developed out of the EMS. The European Monetary Institute would directly precede the European Central Bank. At the a conference of the European Monetary Institute in 1995, the euro was created and was to be the name of the new currency that would replace the former accounting currency, European Currency Unit (ECU). The launch date was set for January 1, 1999. Back in 1997, the European Council ratified the Stability and Growth Pact which set rules on how much EU member states governments could spend. The Pact was meant to ensure fiscal discipline after the euro would be launched in 1999. The ERM II was also established as the exchange rate mechanism between the euro and the national currencies of countries that may enter the eurozone later on.

In 1998, the third stage of Delors's plan involved the selection of 11 member countries that would qualify to adopt the euro in what would be called the eurozone. The prerequisites required for each country to maintain a budget deficit lower than 3% of their national GDP, a national debt level less than 60% of the national GDP, low inflation, and interest rates within the average EU rates. Greece was the only country excluded from the eurozone in January 1999 because they failed to meet those requirements. (They would however later join the eurozone in 2001, thanks to Goldman Sachs.) At the end of the implementation of all 3 of Delors's phases for establishment of a united currency system under the euro, the European Monetary Institute was set to be replaced by the European Central Banks. It had

been established in June of 1998 that the European Central Bank would replace European Monetary Institute after the euro would go into effect in January of 1999. It would be then that conversion rates would be established between the euro and those national currencies of the 11 member countries in the EU that comprised the eurozone. The rates were put in place on a recommendation basis provided to the Council of the EU from the European Commission, and it would be based on market rates on the last day of 1998, so that a 1:1 exchange rate would exist between the European Currency Unit and the euro. The reason it had to be the rates from December 31, 1998 was because the European Currency Unit “depended on the closing exchange rate of the non-euro currencies (principally the pound sterling) that day. Due to differences in national conventions for rounding and significant digits, all conversion between the national currencies had to be carried out using the process of triangulation via the euro.”

The euro became official when the national currencies of the 11 member countries in the eurozone were no longer independent but fixed to each other. The euro was initially launched in virtual form and transacted mostly through electronic means, but eventually replaced the other national currencies in 2002 when euro coins and banknotes were released into circulation. In January of 1999, all bonds and government debts of the 11 EU member countries in the eurozone became denominated into euros. The euro started out already exceeding the value of the US dollar. In January of 1999, the euro was worth 1.16 US dollars. The Deutschmark, which was anticipated to trade concurrently with the euro at the start of January quickly disappeared right after the markets opened. The US dollar would gain ground and go on par with the value of the euro by the end of 1999, which led to emergency measures by the European Central bank to prop up the euro. Member countries of the EU were given a deadline to revoke the legal tender status of their national currencies by February 28, 2002, 2 months after euro coins and banknotes were released into circulation. Germany revoked the legal tender status of the Deutschmark on December 31, 2001, unlike other member countries that waited until the deadline to remove their national currency's legal tender status. In some countries, the exchangeability of the national currency would remain in place until June 30, 2002. For other nations like Germany, Austria, Ireland, and Spain, the national banks there continued to exchange the national currency beyond the June 2002 deadline. In Germany, Deutsch Telekom altered the payment system for 50000 payphones, making them available for accepting Deutschmark coins in 2005.

Over the years after the institution of the euro in 1999 and its brief decline in early 2002, the euro would gradually recover, increasing in value relative to the dollar, and by 2008, one euro would

become worth \$1.59. The euro's value also increased against the pound sterling in the late 2000s. Former chairman of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan forecasted in 2007 that the euro would eventually surpass the importance of the US dollar.

In response to the worldwide financial crisis of 2008 that impacted the EU growth rate negatively, the Lisbon Treaty was established and aimed to foster even greater economic cooperation in Europe by formalising what is called the Eurogroup, a conference of euro finance ministers headed by Jean-Claude Juncker. Germany, however, was skeptical about the efforts of the Eurogroup, believing that it would challenge the sovereignty of the European Central Bank. Just prior to the establishment of the Eurogroup, the leaders of eurozone EU member states met in Paris to discuss the problems arising from the 2008 financial crisis, and it was there where progress was made in discussing measures for responding to the recession. The plan that would come about amounted to over one hundred billion euros that would be injected into the financial system in order to prevent a total collapse. The plan consisted of governments buying up a stake in various banks in order to help raise the banks's finances and facilitate interbank lending. The EU considered cooperation on this matter to be imperative since the prospect of nations going rogue could have made the banking sector's credit issues much worse. And many investors in the EU feared that the 2008 crisis could trigger a possible dissolution of the eurozone. But ultimately, the eurozone recovered quite considerably over the course of 2009 as bond yield spreads between Germany and the less efficient economies in the eurozone had declined. Many credited this aversion of catastrophe on the actions of the European Central Bank, which injected 500 billion euros into the banking sector in June of 2009. Thus the euro would garner a reputation of being safe investment, leading to more European countries applying to become part of the EU.

Despite the bailout by the European Central Bank, Greece and few other member states were in danger of going into default due to the fact that they were still struggling to raise funds. This led to eurozone leaders establishing a plan called the European Financial Stability Facility, and it was created to bail out the struggling member nations in the eurozone. It was backed by funds from the IMF and help from the European Financial Stabilization Mechanism. The debt crisis would compel further urgency among European leaders to push for more European integration. According to the website of the European Commission <https://ec.europa.eu/> "The European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM) was created for the European Commission to provide financial assistance to any EU country experiencing or threatened by severe financial difficulties. The EFSM was used to provide financial assistance conditional on the

implementation of reforms to Ireland and Portugal between 2011 and 2014, and to provide short-term bridge loans to Greece in July 2015.”

The European Financial Stability Facility’s(EFSF) lending capacity of 400 billion euros could be combined with loans from the European Financial Stabilization Mechanism amounting to a max of 60 billion euros, and loans from the IMF at a max of 250 billion euros. The EFSC went into operation in 2011 for the purpose of bailing out Ireland and Portugal. Member states of the EU could request support from the European Commission and the IMF by presenting a fiscal plan that would have to be approved by the Eurogroup. Initially, the country requesting assistance would meet with representatives from the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank and a support program would be drawn up and sent to the Eurogroup for approval. Once the program is approved, the EFSF would provide the loan to the country in need. This would take several days as the EFSF would need time to raise the funds. The amounts dispersed are based on metrics used by the ECB, and the guaranteed amounts to be lent increased from 440 billion euros to 780 billions euros, an increase that would ultimately burden the more fiscally sound member countries of the EU, should one of the member countries default on a EFSF loan. The 2010 bailout of Greece was not part of this EFSF guarantee, but part of another arrangement that involved eurozone countries and the IMF.

Greece was able to become part of the eurozone with the help of Goldman Sachs, an American investment firm. Despite an inability to meet the fiscal requirements of the Stability and Growth Pact, Greece was able to join the eurozone in 2001 through a technique that would mask the government’s debt load through currency swaps. Goldman Sachs provided to Greece a secret loan of 2.8 billion euros which was disguised as a “cross-currency swap.” This complicated transaction artificially wiped out 2% of Greece’s national debt, allowing them to present themselves as eligible to join the eurozone. But when this trick was revealed in 2009, Greece’s deficit turned out to be worse than indicated with its national debt comprising 127% of the GDP. The EU decided to intervene and a troika consisting of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the IMF provided Greece with a 110 billion euro loan to pay off creditors and also adhere to austerity measures such as higher taxes and lower spending so that Greece could grow back into a surplus. The austerity measure however did not produce the intended result. Greece’s national debt would grow to 172% of the GDP by 2011. The troika would provide Greece with another bailout of 130 billion euros and further measures to get Greece to comply with austerity measures. This second attempt would be more successful and Greece would begin to come out of their debt problems. However, the austerity measures were creating domestic problems, such as rising unemployment and a decline in

wages, which would lead to a snap election in Greece in 2015 where the people of Greece would vote into power someone who would do away with the austerity measures. The Prime Minister of Greece demanded for restructuring with the troika, but the increased spending caused Greece to fall further into debt and eventually defaulting, missing a 1.6 billion payment due to the IMF. As Greece shut down its stock market, they would finally give into a third bailout/austerity plan offered by the EU, but to this day Greece is still marred by severe debt problems as a result of their fiscal mismanagement.

Chapter 7: The End of the Rublezone

After the Soviet Union broke up in 1991, Russia and other former Soviet states were looking to figure out what would be the best course of action in terms of currency—remaining within the rublezone or introducing one own national currency. Introducing a currency unique to the country was often a testament to the country's sense of pride, independence, and sovereignty. It also gave a country the necessary backdrop to pursue an independent monetary policy. Much as it was over in western Europe, the former Soviet states in eastern Europe were tempted to avoid multi-national economic integration by issuing a national currency. This sentiment was perhaps stronger in eastern Europe, considering the fact that many of the former Soviet states were eager to breakaway from a bloc that had been largely described as oppressive. Multilateral cooperation was somewhat of a longstanding goal for western Europe. But for eastern Europe states outside of Russia, such was a been-there/done-that perspective, and by 1993, most former Soviet states were gearing up to establish their independent currency. Kyrgystan, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania were pretty dead set on establishing a single national currency for their respective country. Later that same year, Georgia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan were on the same path to independent currency. However, Ukraine and Belarus, as east Slavic nations along with Russia, were slower to embark upon the path of monetary independence, preferring to correspond with Russia on more steady withdrawal from the rublezone. Turkmenistan would later announce its goal to pursue monetary independence. Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan remained undecided, while Tajikstan stated its desire to remain in the ruble zone.

While establishing a single national currency has its benefits, it also comes with drawbacks; one in particular is costs, and sometimes this may outweigh the benefit of independent currency. There is no guarantee of economic success by choosing to go the independent route in terms of monetary policy because much of it is contingent on the country's capabilities, skills, and knowledge. We saw in the case of Germany, especially West Germany that there was no shortage of educated and skilled workers often times willing to work for lower wages. Moreover, when it comes to the costs of establishing monetary reform, much of the success of meeting those costs depends on timing and other factors like fiscal management and labor mobility. Exchange rate may also serve as a factor that stabilizes output. Of course, there is the conflict of interest where an appreciating value in the national currency can diminish a nation's competitive viability in some export markets.

After the Soviet Union collapse, a number of Russian reformers were eager to break up the ruble zone but met considerable

resistance, as fifteen independent central banks began issuing increasingly more ruble credits, which led to hyperinflation between 1992 and 1993. By late 1993, most former Soviet states had left the rublezone, and those countries that departed earlier fared better economically than those who did not. When the Soviet Union broke up into 15 independent states, each of those states had its own central bank that would continue to issue ruble credits. And this was problematic because none of the banks were putting limits on their money issuance since they all assumed that the other central banks continued to issue large credits. The rublezone would thus become hyperinflationary, and this did not curtail support for the zone. The only detractors were First Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar and the Baltic leaders. Gaidar actually wanted Russia to nationalize the ruble, and so did many of Russia's western advisors. But nations that were on the best of terms with Russia, such as Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Tajikistan wanted the rublezone to continue. Those other nations that were eager to distance themselves from Russia, such as Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan were all looking forward to setting up their own national currency. Russia's major concern in this regard was the fact that in the event that other states leave the rublezone and create a national currency, the remaining rubles in those countries could flow into Russia, causing an increase in the money supply of rubles in Russia, thereby further exacerbating inflationary prospects.

In 1992 and 1993, Russia continued to export its energy products to former Soviet states at subsidized prices. But when countries departed the rublezone, Russia had discontinued selling their oil to them at those discounts. The Baltic states which left the eurozone the earliest saw a significant increase in energy prices that Russia was charging them, to the point where they would go from buying Russian oil at discounts to buying Russian oil at world market prices. It was almost an 80% difference. A decline in the terms of trade with Russia was certainly a drawback for former Soviet states leaving the rublezone, but the Baltics were convinced that a national currency was border fence to Russia. Other entities that maintained favorable sentiments about the former establishment wanted the rublezone to remain in place. Many large companies wanted to conduct commerce without serious competition, and be paid through a central bank. It was also the case that many international entities like the EU were in favor of the rublezone remaining in place as they were eager to establish a joint currency zone for Europe, even though such was untenable. This was perhaps indicative of European interests at the time, which was seeking to find alternate methods of banking without centralization. But this was likely a far-fetched goal since it was normally maintained that monetary efficiency is only possible through a central bank that would issue the currency. But in Russia at this

time right after the break-up of the Soviet Union, there were 15 different central banks embarking on a very fast-paced monetary expansion. Each bank realized that the more rubles they issued, the greater the share of the GDP they would account for. But as the ruble supply increased, prices went higher and inflation would grow. In 1992, inflation was between 640 and 3000% among former Soviet states. Among those nations remaining in the rublezone, inflation was as high as 11000% in 1993. Those Baltic states that departed the zone in the summer of 1992 were able to avoid the extremes of an inflationary scenario since with an independent national currency, they could restrict the amount of credit they would issue. Other former Soviet state officials, however, lacked scholarship on currency economics and believed that credit was not money, and because of this, they assumed they could simply reduce the amount of money printing in order to curtail rising inflation. But the printing machines were only in Russia. The other former Soviet states had to make do with what they had in terms of notes still circulating their economy. Thus, when inflation occurred, they would be left with serious cash shortages as prices increased. As a result, many of the non-Russian former Soviet states began printing their own substitute ruble currencies. Yet this did not lead to radical intervention in monetary policy. Russia maintained account surpluses with all the former Soviet states and provided most of their financing. The central banks of these former Soviet states would normally repay their debts to Russia by issuing more ruble credits. According to the IMF, in 1992, Russia's financing made up 91% of Tajikistan's GDP and 70% of Uzbekistan's GDP. For Turkmenistan, Georgia, and Armenia, Russia's financing accounted for about 50% of their GDPs. For Belarus and Moldova, Russia's financing only accounted for 10% of their GDPs. This level of financing had become unsustainable for Russia, who was dealing with their own financial problems. Russia would thus implement monetary tightening measures and restrict credits to those nations. Such led to an arrears crisis. Arrears are inter-enterprise debts. The backdrop of this crisis is understood through the Soviet Union centralized payment system, in which every payment would have to go through the central bank. At one point, the number of enterprises in the Soviet Union were minimal, which is why there was a limit on the number of payments, but as the amount of enterprises in the Soviet Union grew, an increase in payment delays coincided with it. Normally, state-owned enterprises were certain that the state would eventually come around to clearing their inter-enterprise debt. These debts continued to rise because the enterprises would continue to produce and sell the supplies and at times not expect immediate payment in return, assuming that the state would eventually come around to paying them. Many times these arrears were orchestrated for purpose of extracting money from the

government, essentially asking the central bank for a monetary emission. And under the planned economy of the old Soviet Union, this was typically how the system operated. When Russia began money-tightening implementations, these enterprises were not able to find buyers, and many of these enterprises were energy consuming and reliant on raw materials. Because of this, when they could not find buyers for their supplies, they would thus not have the money to purchase energy supplies needed for production. Normally, these enterprises would request a cash injection from the central banks, but at the time in early 1992, Russia was trying to tighten its fiscal policies. As the arrears crisis worsened, the central banks were left with no option but to soften their monetary policies, which led to high inflation. In January of 1992, inter-enterprise debts in Russia totaled around 37 billion rubles, and by July of that same year, the volume of inter-enterprise debt had risen to 3.2 trillion. The arrears crisis would have systemic implications for the Russian economy as the governor of Russia's Central Bank, Georgy Matyukhin, would be replaced by Viktor Gerashchenko. The inflation that came about from the intervention led to the resignation of Yegor Gaydar. Those measures put in place prior to July of 1992 which were intended to reduce the level of arrears may have been counter-intuitive, and many enterprise firms did not heed to those programs which urged for enterprises to adhere to hard budget constraints—covering their costs of production with income generated from sales of their product or from other financial sources. Because enterprises in the former Soviet states believed that their business will receive government subsidies in the future, inter-enterprise borrowing had become more widespread and took prominence over other forms of finance activity, and the resulting growth of such activity nearly collapsed the Russian economy. Interenterprise borrowing is a form of trade credit, which is not inherently a systemic problem to an economic system. For example, in the first quarter of 1992, US trade credit among non-financial institutions was 973 billion. In fact, when it comes to the industrial economy, enterprises borrow from their suppliers and clients quite regularly. But in the Soviet Union a number of businesses were government subsidized, and this made it easier for enterprises to borrow more, assuming they would be bailed out by the central bank at some point. In the US, in order to underscore the risk associated with an inter-enterprise loan, extremely high interest rates are charged. This is unlike Russia, where the interest rate on interenterprise borrowing was zero. The growth of inter-enterprise debts in Russia in 1992 stifled the monetary reforms that were intended to fix the economic problems.

As the Russian Central Bank (CBR) pushed forward with monetary expansion in response to the arrears crisis, it became apparent that the Russian Central Bank would not be able to continue

financing the other former Soviet states. While the Russian government would attempt to intervene by restricting the expansion of credits, CBR governor Viktor Gerashchenko remained keen on the continued expanding of credits. However in April 1993, the Russian government stopped issuing technical credits to former Soviet states and only permitted for credits to be facilitated among government bodies but only from Russia's budget. In July of 1993, the rublezone came to an end when CBR governor declared that all Soviet banknotes would be worthless by the end of the month. This led to a panic in the former Soviet Union, and many people rushed to the banks to withdraw their old soviet banknotes so that they could hurry and purchase items before the value would expire at the end of July 1993. This marked the end of the rublezone as all the former Soviet states would withdraw from the rublezone and establish their own national currency. The only exception was Tajikistan, which was embroiled in internal strife, war, and conflict. The monetary failures of 1993 resulted in 7 of 12 former Soviet republics suffering higher inflation that they did in 1992. In 1994 and 1995, inflation would begin to dwindle, and looking back, one may consider that ending the rublezone worked out for the best. But in hindsight, the volatile transition leads one to think if the chaos could have been avoided. The hyperinflation that ensued after the breakup of the Soviet Union ultimately crushed the economy. The GDP on average in the 12 former Soviet states plummeted 50%. The Baltic states, however, since they departed the rublezone the earliest only suffered a 44% drop on GDP. The poor planning that followed the Soviet Union breakup gave way to a 70% reduction in trade among the former Soviet states between 1991 and 1994. Romania and Bulgaria, while also suffering economically, would have suffered much worse had they not left the rublezone. It becomes clear when observing the Baltic states, that leaving the rublezone as quickly as possible was the best solution and would have prevented the economic disaster that occurred.

Currency zones like the rublezone are quite common. The EU has a eurozone and many small economies actually prefer to peg their currency to a large economy in order to avoid wild currency fluctuations. In fact, a bunch of independent currencies circulating on the market is the exception to the rule. Even the period of economic growth that occurred in the years prior to World War I consisted of two currency zones. One was the Latin Monetary Union which began in 1865 and lasted until 1927. The member nations of this union were France, Belgium, Italy and Switzerland, and later Spain, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Venezuela. The other currency union was the Scandinavian Monetary Union which formed in 1873 and lasted until 1914. The nations that were part of that union were Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. Both unions collapsed when one of the nations within those unions devalued their currency. For the

Latin Monetary Union, it was Greece. For the Scandinavian Monetary Union, it was Sweden. Both the Latin Monetary Union and the Scandinavian Monetary Union differed from the European Monetary Union in that the former's currency cooperation was based on the gold standard, and each country maintained its own central bank. Other examples of monetary unions are the East Caribbean Currency Union, the West African Economic and Monetary Union, and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community. The East Caribbean Currency Union was formed in 1983 and is comprised of 9 Caribbean states--Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Their currency is pegged to the US dollar; and the union maintains a common central bank, The East Caribbean Central Bank. The central bank, however, in their case, does not implement any monetary policy.

The West African Economic and Monetary Union is composed of 8 West African countries, while the Central African Economic and Monetary Community consists of 6 member states. Both the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, along with the West African Economic and Monetary Union, as former French colonies, have been using the African franc since 1945 and both unions have a central bank--the Bank of Central African States and the Central Bank of the West African States. The African franc was previously pegged to the French franc before becoming pegged to the euro. It was devalued in 1948 and 1994.

We can reference these aforementioned examples and see pretty clearly that currency unions are quite common. And for the unions comprised of smaller countries, the common currency has been either based on the gold standard, the dollar, or the euro. Monetary Unions based on a fiat currency tend to take on a different approach. This was the case for the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, Yugoslavia in the year 1990, and the former Soviet states from 1991 – 1993. After World War I, the Austro-Hungarian empire was on a death spiral with no path to recovery. The remaining components of the central government had been financing themselves with vast money creation, and continued along this method even after the armistice was signed in November of 1918. In October, the very next month, Hungary would expand monetary emission, and a currency competition would ensue among AustroHungarian states. This is when Czechoslovakia, another AustroHungarian state, decided to stamp the notes circulating within their country after closing their borders. After doing this, Czechoslovakia imposed strict monetary policies and averted hyperinflation. Austria, Hungary, and Poland on the other hand took no serious monetary policy measures and would thus suffer severe hyperinflation.

Throughout the 1980s after the death of President Tito in 1980,

Yugoslavia was slowly disintegrating amid an unstable economic system. Slovenia, Croatia, and 2 northern republics were maintaining account surpluses with Serbia. In 1991, the National Bank of Yugoslavia, which was managed by the Serbian government, increased monetary emissions for sake of Serbia's economy, and this hampered the value of Yugoslav dinar. Consequently, Slovenia immediately declared independence from the republic of Yugoslavia, much in part to protect its own financial health. Shortly thereafter, Yugoslavia waged war on Slovenia in a conflict that lasted 10 days, to which after was followed by Slovenia departing from the Yugoslavia republic. Slovenia cut ties from Yugoslavia, both politically and financially. Croatia would follow suit but ended up in a violent conflict with Serbia. In the mean time, hyperinflation marred the economies of the remaining countries in the Yugoslavia republic. Those nations were Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia. This hyperinflation coincided with the collapse of the rublezone, and all together there would be 28 occurrences of hyperinflation among Austria-Hungary, Yugoslavia, and the USSR. This underscored the fact that breaking up a currencyzone comes with significant consequences. While the example of the Baltic states' departure from the rublezone indicates that a quick exit is recommended, there is still the possibility to geopolitical fallback as was the case when Slovenia sought independence from the Yugoslavia republic before being attacked by Yugoslavia. Many of the collapses were unexpected, and the subsequent chain of events were far more devastating than anyone could have predicted at that time. In this regard, one cannot discount those events as unrelated to contemporary time-frames. In fact, these currency zones of AustroHungary, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union were very similar to the current eurozone in the EU in that they were real monetary zones with both a common payment system and central bank, along with being comprised of multiple nation states. Therefore, all three in terms of their existence and destruction are very relevant to the eurozone. Being made of a joint central bank and payment system, these currency zones are set up in such a way that if one of the two fails, the economies which are impacted will encounter negative systemic outcomes. If the common payment system ceases to function, liquidity squeeze is likely to follow, which was case during the 2008 financial crisis when Lehman Brothers declared bankruptcy in September of that year.

One thing is clear, currency zones fail when there is no single central bank that is the sole issuer of currency. But even when this is established, competition can still arise among member states, leading to nations, which are part of a zone, opting to stamp their currencies and depart from the monetary union. Thus any central control must be held in place by a very solid consensus among member nations, otherwise, the zone is at risk of collapse. In those previous examples,

the primary central bank disregarded their duties and behaved fiscally irresponsibly, which compelled the more fiscally responsible nations to depart from the zone in the name of self-defense. In the eurozone, the European Central Bank is the primary provider of euro banknotes, but demands for looser or tighter monetary policies by member states could challenge the European Central Bank's authoritative standing on monetary emission. This was the case for a number of years when it came to Germany, the number one economy in the eurozone. Because Germany's citizens have been more geared towards saving rather than spending, Germany has lashed out at the ECB for their loose monetary policies. Germany feared that the ECB's low interest rates would compromise savings and pensioner plans in Germany. If things escalated and Germany was to leave the eurozone, it can be predicted that their new currency would rally and exceed the value of the euro. Depending on the scale of the new currency's increasing value, Germany's export markets could take a serious hit. But on the domestic front, the stronger currency could be beneficial for things like domestic debt which would be denominated in a theoretically weaker euro. On the other hand, as we saw in the cases of AustroHungary, Yugoslavia, and the USSR(Soviet Union), the remaining member states in the eurozone would be subject to inflation risk as euros flow out of Germany into other EU member states, thereby increasing the money supply and inflation risk. For exiting member states of a currency zone, the risk is deflationary. Those remaining member states in the currency zone are essentially left at risk for hyperinflationary collapse.

The eurozone's common payment system is called Target 2 which is how central bank money is electronically transferred among the national central banks within the eurozone. The Target 2 system keeps track of electronic euro transactions between central banks of nations in the eurozone. Up until the euro crisis, Target 2 balances were settled via private interbank market. Prior to the time that Lehman Brothers declared bankruptcy, banks were able to offset declines in customer deposits by borrowing the corresponding amounts on the interbank markets. This is why Target 2 balances were not on the rise before 2008. The bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in 2008, however, created a great deal of mistrust in the interbank markets. The event has reduced the use of this mode of operation and is the starting point of the rise of the Target 2 balances. After the interbank's funding had dissipated in 2011, Target 2 balances increased in economically strong member states of the eurozone. The balances went negative in 8 of the southern member states. Because a lot of electronic euros were flowing into Germany due to the fact that Germany exports a lot to other member states who in turn pay Germany via electronic euros through the Target 2 system, Germany had thus made more claims against the European Central Bank which

oversees the transactions between central banks in Target 2. Adding to these German claims against the European Central Bank was the fact that the Bundesbank was lending a lot of euros to eurozone nations with economic difficulties. Hans-Werner Sinn asserted that the common payment system of the eurozone was essentially acting as a bailout as the Bundesbank was lending money to those member nations of the eurozone experiencing financial hardship. Hans believes that the collapse of the eurozone amid high Target 2 balances would make it impossible for creditor nations like Germany to claim credits. This would thus lead to disputes as the eurozone has no contingency strategy for such a scenario. This is similar to what happened in Russia after the Soviet Union ended. Russia has made claims on rublezone credits that the central banks of former Soviet states were obligated to settle. When former Soviet states left the rublezone and established their own currency, Russia insisted that some of them meet their obligations to the Russian Central Bank via a pre-agreed exchange rate with their new currency. In any case, departures from a currencyzone may not sit well with other members especially if there are large unsettled obligations by the exiting country. In the eurozone, those payables reflected as electronic transfers in Target 2 are collateralized with other assets, such that in the event that one country departs from the eurozone, those assets backing the electronic transactions would cover some of the departing country's outstanding obligations.

The common payment system of the rublezone was something called Kartoteka II. It accounted for all payments within the rublezone, but ran into problems when the volume of payments increased and became unmanageable. Inter-enterprise debts began to accumulate in 1992 because enterprises would forego collecting payments if they knew they could garner subsidies from the state central banks. Enterprises were essentially allowing arrears to develop so that they could justify asking the central banks for monetary emission. Ultimately the central banks would agree to do so, and this is how inflation became out of control at that time. The Eurozone could have faced a similar threat had it not been for German resistance to loose monetary policy by the ECB. Because Germany is so well managed, much like the countries that departed other currencyzone establishments, Germany too would economically benefit by exiting their respective currencyzone, the eurozone. Czechoslovakia's departure from Austro-Hungary, Slovenia's departure from Yugoslavia, and the Baltic states's departure from the USSR all benefited those nations economically and staved off much of the hyper-inflationary scenarios that affected the surrounding regions. If history is to repeat itself in the case of the eurozone, then Germany's eventual departure is not a matter of if, but when. However, some experts don't see Germany as the candidate to leave

the eurozone since based on the previous examples, the nations that departed their respective currency zone were not just fiscally responsible, they were also small. So in this sense, some policy experts believe that should history repeat itself, it would be Finland that could depart the eurozone first since they operate as a benefactor, more so than a beneficiary of the eurozone arrangement. And history shows that the country to exit a “currencyzone under duress” the quickest fares the best. This also underscores another risk arising from instability in the eurozone— nations could become more resolute to exit in order to meet that criteria for offsetting economic risk factors. An all or nothing solution is also possible, meaning that if a currency zone is facing collapse, it could be beneficial that every nation depart simultaneously.

Chapter 8: Bitcoin

The 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent bailout measures renewed pessimism about central banks and their monopoly on monetary emissions. The debates over the controversy of the 2008 bailout led to the creation of Bitcoin, and eventually scores of other digital assets. The fiat currencies of nation states met a potential competitor in Bitcoin and the crypto industry, which led to increased discourse about the possibility of a cashless society. This discussion about a cashless society actually goes back to the early formation of the internet over 20 years ago, and many economic experts and bankers back then ruminated about the possibility of information technology phasing out the need for central banks and paper money. Fast forward to today, the expansion of cryptocurrency has sparked renewed discussion about alternatives to cash and a lessened need for a central bank. But the volatility and risk associated with cryptocurrencies, as indicated by numerous instances of fraud, money laundering, crypto exchange collapses, and illegal activities, has given credence to arguments against the long-term sustainability of cryptocurrency. Nonetheless, central banks have felt increasing pressure from the rise of cryptocurrencies. Cryptocurrencies, according to June 2018 edition of the Finance and Development Journal, are “digital representations of value, made possible by advances in cryptography and distributed ledger technology. They are denominated in their own units of account and can be transferred peer to peer without an intermediary.”

Bitcoin and cryptocurrencies’ value is derived from the prospect of being able to use them to make purchases or exchange them for other fiat currencies. The latter is another factor that has allowed the US to continue with expansionary monetary policies, because Bitcoin’s value is driven by the prospect that it can be exchanged for fiat currencies which in turn raises demand for fiat currency as Bitcoin holders would look to liquidate. This goes for both producers and consumers. Despite the threat of Bitcoin, a number of nations have yet to outlaw the cryptocurrency, and this likely because cryptocurrencies can prop up the value of fiat currency since many bitcoin holders do not see any value in the cryptocurrency other than the fact that it can be exchanged for legal tender at some point. Hence why nations are apprehensive about restricting it—in doing so they would disqualify their own currency from a demand that the bitcoin market fosters, and at the same time allow competing currencies of other nations to use Bitcoin to prop up the value of their national currency. This is likely how Russia got the ruble to recover so quickly following international sanctions imposed upon them after their invasion of Ukraine in 2022; they simply bought up scores of Bitcoin and liquidated them shortly after for rubles. Another factor is that

relatives of Russians living at a distance from the country could only send financial support to their relatives through bitcoin transactions. This influx of crypto likely correlated to a broadened demand for rubles, which in essence increased the value of it. Most nations are aware of how cryptocurrency can prop up the value of their national currency. And this will be the case as long as Bitcoin remains volatile.

On the other hand, a form of cryptocurrency called stablecoin, presents a real danger to national currencies because stablecoins are devised in such a way that investors would be more encouraged hold onto the cryptocurrency over a longer period of time. In stablecoin, volatility is considerably reduced, which would correlate to a lesser demand for fiat currency, a prospect that could turn cryptocurrencies into a direct competitor against fiat currencies. This is unlike non-stable volatile cryptocurrency, which is able to prop up fiat currencies due to the higher rates of liquidity demand. Stablecoins put central banks in a very precarious position. In late 2019, Facebook Inc announced its cryptocurrency initiative called Libra, which would be a "stablecoin" backed by various legal tender currencies, which mitigates the wild price fluctuation that currently afflict regular bitcoin/cryptocurrency. This announcement garnered a great deal of opposition from the global financial community because it could undermine/disrupt the current global financial system. Many countries have openly stated that Libra would be outlawed from being used in their country. Other countries have proposed to directly fight the Libra by starting their own government backed stablecoin. Instead of an open decentralized blockchain network of miners to verify the cryptocurrency transactions, the Libra cryptocurrency blockchain would have been managed by a private entity association, which gives even more rise to scrutiny. Such negative reaction to the initiative by international financial institutions led to Libra's demise shortly thereafter as Facebook would cancel in the initiative.

Chapter 9: Germany's Takeover of NATO and the European Central Bank

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced Germany's intention to dial up their military spending, promising to allocate 100 billion euros to Germany's defense budget for 2022. Germany also agreed to reach the goal of dedicating 2% of their GDP to defense spending in order to meet NATO's criteria. The new spending initiative, Olaf announced in a session of Germany's parliament, would pay for an armaments project that would add to the German military arsenal. Scholz also stated that Germany would look to supply Ukraine with arms to help them fend off the Russian invasion. Scholz stated to the lawmakers in parliament, "In attacking Ukraine, [Russian President Vladimir] Putin does not just want to eradicate a country from the world map, he is destroying the European security structure." With the potential of Russia expanding its military aims, Germany has a greater sense of urgency in equipping themselves with the means to defend their security. This announcement came a year after Germany spent a record amount on building up its military capabilities in 2021. Much of this increased spending has come about not just in reaction to the Russian invasion, but also at the urging of other NATO members like the United States, who felt that Germany was not investing enough in defense. For a number of years, the US felt that it shouldered too much of the load when it came to NATO policy. Yet this move by NATO, not just to allow Germany to rearm itself, but also encourage them is a far cry from the fears that came about from German reunification after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Back then, many western countries were alarmed at the prospect, and now it is clear that the sense of urgency surrounding Germany as a geopolitical force has subsided. Because Germany has been a very fiscally conservative nation and the best economy in the eurozone, many lawmakers are critical of the move by Scholz to increase government spending.

If the next few years sees a Germany that is both carrying much of the load in the eurozone, both economically and militarily, it is possible that Germany's impatience with the European Central Bank (ECB) could increase in the coming years. The biggest complaint that Germany has had with the ECB is their continued insistence on soft monetary strategy. With prices on the rise in Germany as of 2022, the Bundesbank has become insistent that the ECB raise interest rates to reduce inflation risks. A rate hike, many argue, would strengthen the euro and bring down the cost of energy since most energy commodities are priced in US dollars. Germany's creditor strength in the eurozone combined with a growing ability to maintain the security of the eurozone will only add to its "institutional power" to steer the eurozone in accordance with Germany's own fiscal preferences. This is

why Germany is likely in the future to use its bargaining power as the main creditor of the eurozone to garner more influence on ECB policy. Should this not manifest itself to some degree, Germany could become motivated to apply other measures in order to get the ECB to comply with the strategic aims of the Bundesbank. This is why it is likely that Germany would try to ensure 2 major outcomes before they would seek out a deal with Saudi Arabia in which Saudi Arabia would sell oil for euros in exchange for Germany backing Saudi Arabia militarily. These 2 major outcomes would involve cementing Germany's control over the European Central Bank, either through some form of policy agreement, eurozone member state referendum, or directly nationalizing the European Central Bank and the euro for what Germany would consider emergency purposes. As more customers in the eurozone nations move their euros away from their own country's central banks into the Bundesbank, Germany will accrue more claims against the ECB, which will further justify an argument that Germany should have more clout in influencing ECB policy.

Chapter 10: End of the US Unipolar Moment

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the US had become elevated to sole super power status. Since World War II up unto that time, the US could lay claim to vanquishing fascism and communism. And in order to affirm their status, the US would defeat the Iraqi army during the Gulf War in 1991 over a period of 5- 6 weeks, impressive considering the fact that Iraq was the fourth largest armed forces in the world at that time, but yet completely crushed by the US army. America was untouchable and after the Soviet Collapse, the United States had free reign to impose its foreign policy agenda without any significant interference from another nation, now that Moscow was out of the way. Democracy was now the official justification of US foreign policy. When Bill Clinton became president shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, his administration began discourse on how the fall of the Soviet Union should benefit the United States. Many foreign policy pundits wanted the US to return to its old non-interventionist foreign policy and practice restraint. During Clinton's first tenure as president of the United States, a number of academics and professors from MIT wrote an article about US interests. In it, they asserted that an interventionist and globalist agenda was antithetical to US interests, arguing that multilateral relations pursued by the US overseas would only amount to minimal benefit. From their perspective, the US could benefit the domestic economy by contributing less militarily on the international front, thus saving money that could be used at home for issues like budget deficits, infrastructure, and race relations—all of which were less prioritized during the Cold War era. They felt that US involvement overseas would only lead to war weariness. Another factor mentioned in the article was regarding NATO, an international organization they felt had already served its purpose in deterring expansionary ambitions of the Soviet Union. Since it was the case that the Soviet Union collapsed, NATO no longer served any real purpose, which thus refuted the need for the US to continue its military backing of European countries. In this outlook, they argued that the US would shoulder the load for international security issues, even when direct US intervention would be unnecessary. Regardless of this urging from academia and scholars and foreign policy experts, the US continued to push forward with its internationalist agenda and worldwide promotion of democracy. Clinton continued to pursue the development of a multilateral foreign policy backed by the promotion of human rights and democratic values. He reached out to the United Nations and sought collaboration on peacekeeping efforts. While Clinton pursued an international framework where the US would use its military capabilities for intervention in humanitarian crises, he did not want the US to unilaterally solve the world's problems. During

Clinton's tenure, unwilling to have the US standby and witness overseas atrocities without doing anything, he ordered American military intervention in Somalia in 1993, Bosnia in 1995, and Kosovo in 1999. The US was also adamant about maintaining its geopolitical edge over other potential competitors like China and Russia, which cultivated a sense of urgency in the US to continue upgrading its military technology and capabilities. However, Clinton's opposition, the Republican party, was antagonistic to his multilateral approach, and when George W Bush ran for president in 2000, he vowed to remove the US from UN influence, and he also hated the idea that US troops should operate under the command of UN peacekeeping commanders. Bush preferred a foreign policy that was more unilateral in its approach, and he was also suspicious of the UN because he saw it as world order that could at some point interfere with US domestic policy. After Bush became president in 2000, he made it his objective to continue defense spending. He also wanted to challenge rising competitors and address nuclear proliferation issues by cracking down on rogue regimes who may be trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In September of 2001, in less than nine months into Bush's presidency, the US would experience one of the worst attacks on its own soil.

On September 11, 2001, terrorist hijackers of three commercial airliners that day took control of the planes and crashed them into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington DC, killing 3000 people. Among those killed were 372 foreigners, 138 of them from Latin America and the Caribbean. In the aftermath of the attacks, America found themselves appalled that such an attack could be carried out on US citizens, and many did not understand how such hate could be harbored against the United States. Some attributed the attack to extremist Islamic ideology, others to US foreign policy of having US soldiers based in Saudi Arabia following the Gulf War. The latter had become a serious offense to Muslims that regard Saudi Arabia as holy land, and US military presence there is one of the factors the conspirators of the 9/11 terrorist attacks used to justify their heinous actions on September 11, 2001. The other motive for the attack was outrage over US support of Israel in an ongoing conflict that has resulted in large scale civilian deaths. A week after the attacks, Bush held a joint session of Congress stating that it was hatred that motivated the attack, as Bush would say "They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other." Fear permeated Washington DC and many in the government felt that a second attack was more than likely to happen. But Bush did not support a passive strategy, preferring to go the pre-emptive route and push for reforms in US foreign policy. He established a new national security doctrine that would discard

the former multilateral approach, and insert the unilateral approach. The doctrine also asserted a preemptive policy and the exportation of democratic values to the middle east in order to deter extremism. Within a month after the attacks, after giving Afghanistan an ultimatum to hand over Osama Bin Laden, the US invaded Afghanistan and Al Qaeda. In 3 months, the US drove out the Taliban and began a lone arduous 20 year process of trying to install a new pro-democratic government there, a task that would ultimately fail. Shortly afterwards in 2003, 2 years after the US invaded Afghanistan, Bush would launch an invasion of Iraq on the premise that Saddam Hussein was developing weapons of mass destruction. Despite lack of evidence from UN inspectors that such was the case, the US moved forward with the invasion regardless, justifying it by asserting that Saddam was trying to buy yellow cake uranium from West Africa. The US also chose not to seek UN approval for the invasion, which was right inline with Bush's initial platform for a unilateral approach that separates US policy from the UN's. The US would complete the overthrow of Saddam's regime in short order, but would face a long process of stabilizing the new Iraqi government against an insurgency of Al Qaeda offshoots and Saddam loyalists. Between Afghanistan and Iraq, the US spent billions of dollars in aid to stabilize the countries in the post-war era. But various factors like power struggles, corruption, and insurgency protracted US involvement and at times threatened to undo all the efforts aimed to democratize the region. A growing restlessness at home that saw no end in sight gave rise to a war weary sentiment that insisted a complete pullout of US forces from the region as quickly as possible. Americans became desperate for a change in US foreign policy and during the 2008 presidential election, Barack Obama presented a platform to the American public that revolved around bringing troops home, and moving forward with a foreign policy that would depart with direct US intervention in foreign conflict. Obama promised to withdraw US troops from Afghanistan and Iraq and also repair damaged US foreign relations which occurred as a result of previous foreign policy. He also stated his intention to restore the multilateral approach of cooperating with international organizations. This platform helped Barack Obama win the 2008 presidential election and in just eight months after he entered office, he would win the Nobel Peace Prize. And by the end of 2011, Obama withdrew US forces from Iraq. However, the Arab Spring in 2011 which provoked widespread protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa would challenge Obama's original platform of US non-intervention overseas. As these protests triggered violent government crackdowns on protesters in Libya and Syria which led to numerous civilian deaths, pressure was put on the Obama administration to intervene in a growing human rights catastrophe. Obama would facilitate the overthrow of Gaddafi from

Libya in 2011, despite Libya posing no imminent threat to the United States. NATO forces conducted airstrikes on various Libyan military posts, which caused more civilian casualties and gave rise to more extremism. The Obama administration then asserted regime change in Syria by recognizing the anti-government/anti-Assad rebels as the official governing authority of the country. Meanwhile, ISIS, a terrorist group made up of former Al Qaeda operatives, Iraqi insurgents, and Saddam loyalists, began embarking upon a series of attacks in Iraq and Syria after declaring a worldwide caliphate. Shortly thereafter, they managed to seize large swaths of territory in both nations. This led to US re-engagement, forcing the Obama administration to order airstrikes in Iraq and Syria in order to stop further destabilization of the region. The growing ISIS threat in Syria led to Russia sending military aid in form of air support in 2015 to back the Assad regime against the Syrian rebels and ISIS. Once again, the middle east had become a hotbed of violence and terror. Before long, both Libya and Syria would become a humanitarian catastrophe. US foreign policy during the Obama administration, despite its stated goals of pursuing diplomacy and better international relations, did little to resolve the middle east crisis. The administration would also set the stage for growing US tension with Russia.

At the 2008 NATO Summit in Romania, Vladimir Putin, president of Russia, used the event to state emphatically “The emergence of a powerful military bloc at our borders will be seen as a direct threat to Russian security.” The US followed up at the same summit in 2008 with: “NATO welcomes Ukraine’s and Georgia’s Euro Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO.” Thus, it was there when it became clear that Ukraine joining NATO was the primary flashpoint for Russia in their aggressive geopolitical policy towards Ukraine since 2014. Even back in 2008, France and Germany were also opposed to bringing those countries into NATO because its a European security issue, a fact that drew no sensitivity from the US. In retrospect, from 2000 to 2008, Russia put forth a western friendly foreign policy agenda, even flirting with the idea of joining NATO, which would have made Russia a military ally with the United States. Russia also signed on to a strategic partnership with the EU in 2000, stating Russia’s intention to recognize the sovereign rights of Ukraine. However, the United States and NATO’s illegal war against Iraq in 2003, and its aggressive and unfettered military interventions in Libya and Syria in 2011 alarmed the Russian state in what Russia felt was an audacious foreign policy where the United States was attempting to position itself as an international police force. There was also a double standard that Russia felt the United States was applying by justifying their role in destabilizing Libya and Syria,

asserting regime change, militarily aiding government opposition, and yet pointing out the moral implications of other countries looking to assert their own regional interests. This only served to confirm Moscow's suspicions of NATO. Russia believed that after the Cold War, NATO had no purpose since its initial establishment was not only for the sake of constraining German and Japan militarily, but also deterring any expansionist ambition of the Soviet Union after World War II. After NATO incorporated West Germany into the alliance, the Soviet Union, likewise, established the Warsaw pact with other eastern European countries, as well as East Germany in order to deter NATO expansion. But after the Soviet Union ended, the Soviets relinquished control over the alliance and effectively dissolved the Warsaw pact. In doing this, Russia was promised security guarantees from NATO, and Russia often stated that NATO has never fulfilled these promises and that NATO only continues to exist as a provocational entity, conducting aggressive military exercises near Russia's borders on a regular basis. All these factors, along with the fact that Ukraine had been entertaining the possibility of a military alliance with a multi-national military bloc (NATO), played a significant role in Russia's assertive policy against Ukraine in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea. Numerous foreign policy experts since the late 1990s warned about the dangerous implications of NATO expansion. Here is an excerpt from a May 2nd, 1998 interview with George F. Kennan by New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman. Kennan was a US diplomat during the Cold War and advocate of containment strategy:

"I think it (NATO expansion) is the beginning of a new cold war. I think the Russians will gradually react quite adversely and it will affect their policies. I think it is a tragic mistake. There was no reason for this whatsoever. No one was threatening anybody else. This expansion would make the founding fathers of this country turn over in their graves....."We have signed up to protect a whole series of countries, even though we have neither the resources nor the intention to do so in any serious way. [NATO expansion] was simply a lighthearted action by a Senate that has no real interest in foreign affairs. What bothers me is how superficial and ill informed the whole Senate debate was. I was particularly bothered by the references to Russia as a country dying to attack Western Europe....."Don't people understand? Our differences in the Cold War were with the Soviet Communist regime. And now we are turning our backs on the very people who mounted the greatest bloodless revolution in history to remove that Soviet regime. And Russia's democracy is as far advanced, if not farther, as any of these countries we've just signed up to defend from Russia. Of course there is going to be a bad reaction from Russia, and then [the NATO

expanders] will say that we always told you that is how the Russians are – but this is just wrong."

This is an excerpt from a leaked diplomatic cable from Wikileaks in 2008 in which William Burns, U.S. Ambassador to Russia (2005-2008), is detailing the implications of admitting Ukraine into NATO:

NATO enlargement, particularly to Ukraine, remains 'an emotional and neuralgic' issue for Russia, but strategic policy considerations also underlie strong opposition to NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia. In Ukraine, these include fears that the issue could potentially split the country in two, leading to violence or even, some claim, civil war, which would force Russia to decide whether to intervene,"

From NATO's official website, a paper written in June 2000 entitled "NATO's Relations with Russia and Ukraine" written by R. Craig Nation, a Professor of Strategy and Director of Russian and Eurasian Studies at the US Army War College in Carlyle, Pennsylvania from 1996-2017, states:

Meaningful security guarantees for Ukraine can only be provided by NATO, but there will be serious political and operational constraints to any largescale use of Alliance forces in the Eurasian steppe. Moscow has committed itself to a national military strategy that emphasizes reliance upon tactical nuclear weapons in a phase of conventional weakness. Assertive military commitments in areas immediately contiguous to the Russian border will therefore pose considerable risk. Moscow is willing and able to assert meaningful pressure in close proximity to its frontiers, and in the central European corridor it can be counted upon to do so if vital interests are perceived to be at stake. Zero-sum competition for Ukraine's heart and mind is therefore a dangerous game. "Washington's inclusion of the region near Russia's borders as vital US security interests or targets for expanding US influence," writes Sergo Mikoyan, "will make managing regional conflicts in these areas more difficult, if not impossible."

In 2014, Russia accused the United States of supporting the overthrow of pro-Russian Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych, but the White House never officially declared that it no longer recognized Yanukovych as Ukraine's legitimate president. A US spokesperson would go as far as to state: "Mr. Yanukovych lost legitimacy as the leader of Ukraine," Shortly thereafter, however, Russia would annex Crimea and then instigate a civil war in eastern Ukraine.

In 2016, Donald Trump would become president of the United States, running on a platform to make America great again. Much of President Trump's policy was an attempt to emulate the policy goals of former President Ronald Reagan, and shift away from the multilateralism that defined Obama's foreign policy. Trump aimed to do this by bringing the US back to the unilateral approach applied by previous republican presidents. Much like George W Bush, President Trump was uncomfortable with having to compromise US initiative for the sake of cooperating with international organizations. Trump also applied a strategy that gave less importance to diplomacy and more credence to defense. When he first got in office, he reversed the decision to withdraw US Troops from Syria and Iraq, and he also removed aid barriers levied upon Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. He took on a very conciliatory approach with Vladimir Putin and advocated a preference for leaders who could display a certain amount of savvy and strength, leaders such as Al-Sisi in Egypt, Duterte in the Philippines, and Erdogan in Turkey. Trump conveyed with conviction that his policies would be aimed to put America first when it came to foreign relations. Thus in 2018, his budget proposal cut spending on most government agencies, except the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Veteran Affairs. In late 2017, making a seemingly sudden u-turn on his pro-Putin perspective, Trump approved a plan to send lethal military aid to Ukraine, arms which included sniper rifles and Javelin anti-tank missiles, all aimed to help Ukraine fight against the Russia-backed separatists in the Donbas region. This move by the Trump administration increased US involvement in Ukraine's geopolitical affairs with Russia, and alarmed the Russian state who initially thought Trump was a supporter of Russian policy. The move also did not figure into the US media's narrative that Trump was pro-Russian. It became impossible to explain the juxtaposition of Trump's pro-Putin rhetoric and his anti-Russian policy. The tenure of Donald Trump and the early part of the Biden administration would prove to have devastating consequences for the security of eastern Europe. Trump, during his tenure, also harshly criticized NATO, considering it outdated. President Trump would often point out how the US is shouldering much of the military defense aspect of NATO policy, while other member nations like Germany are taking advantage by spending less on their own defense. This rhetoric would have major consequences and ultimately set Germany on the path to economic, military, and political independence.

In 2019, when Volodymyr Zelensky became president of Ukraine, president Donald Trump became embroiled in a quid pro quo scandal which violated the US law that a sitting president is not to seek foreign help to win an election. After Biden declared his intention to run for president in 2020, Trump asked Zelensky via telephone that

he investigate Joe Biden's involvement in the legal proceedings of an energy company in Ukraine that his son, Hunter Biden, worked at while Biden was Vice President during Obama's tenure. Trump then threatened to cut billions in military aid to Ukraine if Zelensky did not comply. This led to Trump getting impeached in 2020. He was later acquitted.

The global COVID-19 pandemic was the global spread of a deadly coronavirus strain which started in Wuhan, China. The virus began to spread to the rest of the world starting around January 15th of 2020. Throughout the time of the pandemic, NATO was still conducting aggressive military exercises near Russia's borders, and refused to agree to Russia's proposals for both nations to scale down military exercises. Meanwhile, in defiance of numerous US allies, President Trump pulled the US out of the 1992 Open Skies Treaty in late 2020. Mike Pompeo, US secretary of State from 2018-2021, asserted that Russia had not been in compliance due to the fact that they were imposing unilateral restrictions. The treaty was a confidence building instrument and allowed all 34 member states in the treaty to conduct joint observation flights over each other's territory and observe the activities of military personnel there. It was essentially a trust building exercise and meant to cultivate multilateralism. Any images compiled during the observational flights could be transmitted to any nation in the treaty. Both the US and Russia had placed some unilateral restriction on some areas of their respective territories. Furthermore, the US was eager to withdraw from the treaty so that they could stop spending resources on upgrading the observational aircraft, which they considered outdated. The House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) and Rep. William Keating (D-Mass.) sharply criticized the move by the Trump administration, stating in statement issued on November 23, 2020 that "President Trump is attempting to burn down our critical institutions on his way out the door," they wrote. "In doing so, he not only jeopardized U.S. national security, but he blatantly ignored and deliberately broke the law." This occurred a year after the Trump Administration pulled out of another treaty with Russia, the 1987 INF Treaty. The INF treaty banned ground-launched intermediate range ballistic missiles. The US accused Russia in 2014 of violating the treaty by testing a cruise missile. Russia, on the other hand, accused the US of violating the treaty by setting up nuclear defense systems in eastern Europe. Many fear that without the treaty, there would be no limit as to how far nuclear weapons proliferation would go.

After vowing to keep US soldiers in Syria, President Trump decided in October of 2019 to withdraw the remaining US troops from Syria. In recent years up onto that point, the US had been launching airstrikes in Syria and also kept a number ground troops stationed there in the fight against ISIS. One of the US's closest partners during

the campaign were the Kurdish fighters, thousands of whom have been killed in Syria since 2014. They were leading a coalition of multi-ethnic fighters called the Syrian Democratic Forces. In 2019, however, Turkey was preparing to launch an offensive in the region to repel the Kurdish presence near Turkey's border. The Kurdish militia serving alongside the US and leading the Syrian Democratic Forces in Syria was known as the YPG, a group that Turkey's president, Recep Erdogan, believes is simply an offshoot of the PKK, a group that both the US and Turkey has designated as a terrorist group. And the fact that the US was allied with the group during the Syrian campaign created a tension between the US and Turkey that became unsustainable. Thus Erdogan made it clear to Trump that Turkey was going to attack the Syrian border regardless of US presence. After a phone call with the Turkish president on this matter, Trump ordered the removal of the remaining 1000 US troops in Syria, and many US soldiers felt as though they were abandoning their closest ally and leaving them to be slaughtered by the Turkish army. The US would later confirm that the Kurdish fighters they cooperated with in Syria were an offshoot of the PKK, a US designated terrorist group. All things considered, the string of treaty violations and abandonment of partnership obligations conducted by the Trump administration, paved the way for the irreversible loss of trust between the United States and overseas partners. This loss of trust would reach a tipping point during the next administration to take office in Washington D.C.

When Joseph Biden became president of the US in 2020 and took office in 2021, he hesitated to reestablish similar multilateral treaties to the ones that the previous administration withdrew the US from. He also pursued a combative stance against other world leaders such as President Vladimir Putin of Russia and the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman. In an interview in March of 2021, Biden referred to Putin as a "killer" and threatened to impose reprisals on him for interfering in the 2020 election. Shortly afterwards, 27 political organizations wrote to Biden urging him to scale down his combative rhetoric. In a statement issued by them in March of 2021, they stated:

"As national organizations that advocate for diplomacy, arms control, disarmament and peace, we are deeply alarmed by the recent negative exchanges between leaders of the two countries with more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads in their arsenals,...." "As Americans, we urge the Biden administration to stop participating in such reckless rhetorical exchanges and to instead vigorously pursue nuclear arms negotiations with the Russian government," Some of the groups involved included Justice Democrats, Blue America, Demand Progress, Our Revolution and Progressive

Democrats of America. Alan Minsky, the executive director of the Progressive Democrats of America said in the statement “The grassroots progressive base of the Democratic Party has zero interest in a bellicose foreign policy towards Putin or Russia, ...“What people want is a safer world with international cooperation, which will allow all of us to rebound more quickly from the public health and economic catastrophe of the past year. We have no patience for Cold War saber-rattling, let alone nuclear brinkmanship,”

Biden later clarified the “killer” remark during a phone conversation directly with Putin in June of 2021.

The US military pulled out of Afghanistan on August 30, 2021, ending a 20 year military operation there. After successfully overthrowing the Taliban in 2001, the remaining US military presence in the region could be defined by a long arduous process of trying to stabilize Afghanistan’s new pro-democracy government. Throughout that time, the Taliban, though removed from power, remained a consistent threat to the newly installed government and was able to regain some lost territories. In February of 2020, the Trump administration and the Taliban confirmed an accord known as the Doha Agreement, which established that the US would remove all of its troops from the Afghanistan region if the Taliban agrees to restrict Al Qaeda from operating in Taliban-held areas, as well as pursue ceasefire agreements with the new Afghan government. This correspondence between the Trump administration and the Taliban did not involve the Afghan government. Under the Doha agreement, the US would reduce US troop presence in Afghanistan from 13000 to 8600 by July 2020 and remove the remaining by May 1 2021. When Biden entered office, the number of US troops in Afghanistan had been reduced to 2500, but a month before the deadline established in the Doha agreement, Biden decided to extend the target date for withdrawal to September of 2021. On May 1st, however, which was the deadline for US troop withdrawal initially agreed upon by both Trump and the Taliban, the Taliban launched an offensive and in July, NATO would forecast that the Taliban would reclaim Afghanistan within weeks after full US withdrawal. However, the Taliban advance transpired much faster than anticipated. Consequently, the US attempted to facilitate the evacuation of embassy workers, US citizens, and Visa applicants as quickly as possible by deploying close to 5000 US troops to Kabul airport. 2000 more would be deployed following the Taliban’s recapture of Kabul on August 15th. General Sami Sadat of the Afghan army considered US withdrawal as a betrayal of the Afghan army and stated to the New York Times that the agreement orchestrated by President Trump, as well as Biden’s statement “American troops

cannot and should not be fighting in a war and dying in a war that Afghan forces are not willing to fight for themselves.” only emboldened the Taliban. He also mentioned that the 17000 personnel contractors that left Afghanistan in July, took with them critical weapons like helicopter missile defense and tracking technologies. Ashraf Ghani, president of Afghanistan prior to the Taliban takeover, would assert that the US’s abrupt withdrawal gave momentum to the Taliban. Shortly after the Taliban takeover, a suicide bombing occurred at Hamid Karzai International Airport on August 26, 2021, killing 13 US military personnel and 70 Afghan citizens. The last plane to leave Kabul airport departed on August 30, 2021.

In retrospect, we can see how the abandonment of multilateral efforts in favor of a unilateral approach could exacerbate geopolitical tensions, and also undermine critical alliances, especially when the breach of contract is blatant. Both of these aspects—unilateral insistence and breach of treaty, along with a willingness to abandon allies abruptly—cultivate a sense a sense of fear and mistrust. This growing aspect in US foreign policy reached its most critical stage during the Biden Administration when after assuring Ukrainian President Zelensky that the US would act “swiftly and decisively” if Russia invades his country, Biden refused to intervene militarily when Russia did launch a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Zelensky would state shortly thereafter “We have been left alone to defend our state.” This failure of the US to once again uphold a promise had a negative residual effect on the sentiments of US allies. The most critical ally of the US, Saudi Arabia, in March of 2022 considered selling oil to the Chinese for Chinese Yuan instead of US dollars, a move that would topple the United States economy. The US failure on the Ukraine crisis will affect the international standing of the United States in the long run, and many nations will hesitate to establish any bilateral relations with them, which in the long term will eventually lead to the US becoming a pariah state. The US is now in danger of losing its economic and military super power status, while at the same time, being completely oblivious to the implications of Germany’s effort to beef up their own military arsenal and reestablish themselves as a major military force in western Europe. This combined with the fact of Germany’s economic leverage in western Europe as the top economy and one of the top creditor nations in the eurozone, leaves it all the more likely that Germany will eventually attempt to leave the eurozone or assume control of the European Central Bank, and also usurp the United States’ position as Saudi Arabia’s most important ally.

Chapter 11: The Rise of American Marxism

The case for a rising Marxist movement in America can be extrapolated from an excerpt of John Maynard Keynes's book "The Economic Consequences of the Peace." Here it lays out the groundwork for the rise and fall of a capitalist system:

Europe was so organized socially and economically as to secure the maximum accumulation of capital. While there was some continuous improvement in the daily conditions of life of the mass of the population, Society was so framed as to throw a great part of the increased income into the control of the class least likely to consume it. The new rich of the nineteenth century were not brought up to large expenditures, and preferred the power which investment gave them to the pleasures of immediate consumption. In fact, it was precisely the inequality of the distribution of wealth which made possible those vast accumulations of fixed wealth and of capital improvements which distinguished that age from all others. Herein lay, in fact, the main justification of the Capitalist System. If the rich had spent their new wealth on their own enjoyments, the world would long ago have found such a régime intolerable. But like bees they saved and accumulated, not less to the advantage of the whole community because they themselves held narrower ends in prospect.

The immense accumulations of fixed capital which, to the great benefit of mankind, were built up during the half century before the war, could never have come about in a Society where wealth was divided equitably. The railways of the world, which that age built as a monument to posterity, were, not less than the Pyramids of Egypt, the work of labor which was not free to consume in immediate enjoyment the full equivalent of its efforts.

Thus this remarkable system depended for its growth on a double bluff or deception. On the one hand the laboring classes accepted from ignorance or powerlessness, or were compelled, persuaded, or cajoled by custom, convention, authority, and the well-established order of Society into accepting, a situation in which they could call their own very little of the cake that they and Nature and the capitalists were co-operating to produce. And on the other hand the capitalist classes were allowed to call the best part of the cake theirs and were theoretically free to consume it, on the tacit underlying condition that they consumed very little of it in practice. The duty of "saving" became nine-tenths of virtue and the growth of the cake the object of true religion. There grew round the non-consumption of the cake all those instincts of puritanism which in other ages has withdrawn itself from the world and has neglected the arts of production as well as those of enjoyment. And so the cake

increased; but to what end was not clearly contemplated. Individuals would be exhorted not so much to abstain as to defer, and to cultivate the pleasures of security and anticipation. Saving was for old age or for your children; but this was only in theory,—the virtue of the cake was that it was never to be consumed, neither by you nor by your children after you.

In writing thus I do not necessarily disparage the practices of that generation. In the unconscious recesses of its being Society knew what it was about. The cake was really very small in proportion to the appetites of consumption, and no one, if it were shared all round, would be much the better off by the cutting of it. Society was working not for the small pleasures of to-day but for the future security and improvement of the race,—in fact for "progress." If only the cake were not cut but was allowed to grow in the geometrical proportion predicted by Malthus of population, but not less true of compound interest, perhaps a day might come when there would at last be enough to go round, and when posterity could enter into the enjoyment of our labors. In that day overwork, overcrowding, and underfeeding would have come to an end, and men, secure of the comforts and necessities of the body, could proceed to the nobler exercises of their faculties. One geometrical ratio might cancel another, and the nineteenth century was able to forget the fertility of the species in a contemplation of the dizzy virtues of compound interest.

There were two pitfalls in this prospect: lest, population still outstripping accumulation, our self-denials promote not happiness but numbers; and lest the cake be after all consumed, prematurely, in war, the consumer of all such hopes.

But these thoughts lead too far from my present purpose. I seek only to point out that the principle of accumulation based on inequality was a vital part of the pre-war order of Society and of progress as we then understood it, and to emphasize that this principle depended on unstable psychological conditions, which it may be impossible to recreate. It was not natural for a population, of whom so few enjoyed the comforts of life, to accumulate so hugely. The war has disclosed the possibility of consumption to all and the vanity of abstinence to many. Thus the bluff is discovered; the laboring classes may be no longer willing to forego so largely, and the capitalist classes, no longer confident of the future, may seek to enjoy more fully their liberties of consumption so long as they last, and thus precipitate the hour of their confiscation.

There is without question that the chain of crisis events over a short period of time in the United States will have a significant impact on how consumers approach their personal monetary behaviors. Events such as the fragmentation of the country along political and ethnic

lines; the overwhelming number of mass shootings in the country; violent riots and re-surgings homicide rates; a global COVID-19 pandemic in which America would fare the worst, suffering the highest death rate among all countries; a war in eastern Europe at risk of igniting worldwide conflict of nuclear proportions. All of these will lead to what Keynes describes in “The Economic Consequences of the Peace.” The sense of impending doom that will underscore in the minds of many the “vanity of abstinence”, which will thus magnify the importance of consumption. And as those who wield the power of fixed capital become no longer “confident of the future”, their choice “to enjoy more fully their liberties of consumption so long as they last” could ignite a sober awareness of wealth inequality that would precipitate what Karl Marx would define as the proletariat revolution. The revocation of the virtue status that once came with vigorous saving and abstinence, followed by the rise, from among the wealthier classes, of an ostentatious spending and consuming amid a growing loss of confidence in the future, is what will set the stage for class warfare and a very real communist revolution in the United States.

Chapter 12: A Second Coming of the Non-Aggression Pact

When it comes to a second non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia, we can look back at Keynes, and see that he was well aware of the importance of German/Russia relations on the world's economic climate. He writes in "The Economic Consequences of the Peace":

I see no possible means of repairing this loss of productivity within any reasonable period of time except through the agency of German enterprise and organization. It is impossible geographically and for many other reasons for Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Americans to undertake it;—we have neither the incentive nor the means for doing the work on a sufficient scale. Germany, on the other hand, has the experience, the incentive, and to a large extent the materials for furnishing the Russian peasant with the goods of which he has been starved for the past five years, for reorganizing the business of transport and collection, and so for bringing into the world's pool, for the common advantage, the supplies from which we are now so disastrously cut off. It is in our interest to hasten the day when German agents and organizers will be in a position to set in train in every Russian village the impulses of ordinary economic motive. This is a process quite independent of the governing authority in Russia; but we may surely predict with some certainty that, whether or not the form of communism represented by Soviet government proves permanently suited to the Russian temperament, the revival of trade, of the comforts of life and of ordinary economic motive are not likely to promote the extreme forms of those doctrines of violence and tyranny which are the children of war and of despair.

Let us then in our Russian policy not only applaud and imitate the policy of non-intervention which the Government of Germany has announced, but, desisting from a blockade which is injurious to our own permanent interests, as well as illegal, let us encourage and assist Germany to take up again her place in Europe as a creator and organizer of wealth for her Eastern and Southern neighbors.

There are many persons in whom such proposals will raise strong prejudices. I ask them to follow out in thought the result of yielding to these prejudices. If we oppose in detail every means by which Germany or Russia can recover their material well-being, because we feel a national, racial, or political hatred for their populations or their Governments, we must be prepared to face the consequences of such feelings. Even if there is no moral solidarity between the nearly-related races of Europe, there is an economic solidarity which we cannot disregard. Even now, the world markets are one. If we do not allow Germany to exchange products with Russia and so feed herself, she must inevitably compete with us for

the produce of the New World. The more successful we are in snapping economic relations between Germany and Russia, the more we shall depress the level of our own economic standards and increase the gravity of our own domestic problems. This is to put the issue on its lowest grounds. There are other arguments, which the most obtuse cannot ignore, against a policy of spreading and encouraging further the economic ruin of great countries.

These words by Keynes hold true in the world today, a world that is witnessing Russia exert aggression against its foremost western neighbor in Ukraine. The thesis of this book, one which foresees Germany competing directly with the US for mideast influence is right on line with Keynes when he says: "If we do not allow Germany to exchange products with Russia and so feed herself, she must inevitably compete with us for the produce of the New World." This statement in itself affirms the thesis that Germany will without question look to undercut US interests in the middle east and set up a petroeuro or petrodeutschmark deal with Saudi Arabia, replacing and phasing out the old petrodollar agreement.

As the US fades from international affairs, it becomes clear how the US is setting up its own economic and domestic demise. It becomes predictable that the Russian ruble will recover via Russia withholding fertilizer from the US and thus taking over the ethanol market by way of their wheat and corn surplus. This would coincide with Germany's military, political, and economic expansion in western Europe and Saudi Arabia selling oil for the German currency in exchange for security guarantees from Germany. Both Germany and Russia share the same goals of a multipolar, multilateral world, and could look to reestablish the non-aggression pact, along with an economic agreement and secret protocol outlining their respective spheres of influence. Central Africa will be the platform for this to happen, since the sustainment of a multipolar world will require deterring the one entity that insists on continuing its unipolar moment. The manner of which this would be achieved is by controlling the supply of one of the most critical minerals for military potency. That mineral is cobalt.

The new non-aggression pact involving Germany, Russia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo(DRC) could orchestrate a peace plan in which Russia would be allowed to mine cobalt in the Congo in exchange for Russia providing military support to the DRC and allowing the DRC president to mediate in Russian geopolitical crises. China would continue to develop infrastructure in the Congo, while Germany would provide to the DRC arms purchased from Ukraine, in exchange for being allowed to build a dam in the Congo to develop green hydrogen, with the option of purchasing cobalt directly from either Chinese or Russian mining companies operating in the Congo.

Under this deal, Ukraine's economy is bolstered by establishing an arms export industry, of which Germany becomes its number one client through buying arms from Ukraine and shipping them to central Africa. This arrangement would be detailed in Germany's new non-aggression pact with Russia. Once the major portion of the Ukraine/Russia war settles down, Ukraine will have amassed a large scale military arsenal supplied to them by the United States and much of western Europe, setting the stage for Ukraine to become the top net exporter of arms.

The conflict in Ukraine, from the civil war in eastern Ukraine in 2014 up unto the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has underscored the need to bolster Ukraine's army and defense capabilities. Much of this necessity will eventually fall on the shoulders of Ukraine's military industrial complex through weapons production, modernization, and repair. But since the Russian invasion of the country in 2022, Ukraine's demand for arms has exceeded its supply, and due to this, they will become in the near future a net importer of arms, indicative of the fact that they still have to pay for the arms supplied to them by the west in response to the Russian invasion. The civil war in eastern Ukraine in 2014 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 had led to a collapse of Ukraine's arms export market, falling from a previous position of being ranked in the top 10 of world leaders in arms exports. In 2012, before the civil war in Donbas, Ukraine was the world's fourth largest arms exporter. Furthermore, in order for Ukraine's army to become competitive in the global arms market, weapons manufacturers in the region will have to produce arms on par with the technological level of arms being imported. This will require a certain degree of reverse engineering. This realization of Ukraine's arms export potential now that its supply of weapons has increased exponentially becomes relevant, and the economics of recovery are still issues that have to be addressed. Ukraine has trailed the world's top technologically advanced nations in terms of arms production, and most of the weapons produced by Ukraine's military industrial complex were Soviet era with a few minor upgrades. But now with the war in Ukraine in 2022, Ukraine domestic arms manufacturers will have access to new technologies.

The US trying to lead the crusade in pushing for low to no cobalt cathode materials for EV batteries. The only promising prospect seems to be high nickel or high maganese cathode materials. Still and all, the US is not a major extractor of nickel and will likely remain relegated to foreign reliance on the material. The difference between nickel and cobalt in terms of US import is that it would be easier for the US to secure imports of nickel from Canada, than cobalt from central Africa. The other option is manganese. Batteries that contain a high manganese cathode is safer and cheaper than ones with high

nickel cathode materials. However, when it comes to battery research, there is always a trade-off. In this case of higher manganese, increasing the level of manganese decreases the cathode's stability, which will effect its performance. US defense is funding research into manganese cathodes for batteries in order to reduce their reliance on battery imports from China. Successful implementation of manganese, which is more widely available on earth than cobalt, would reduce an overall reliance on cobalt from the Congo. While many are confident in research concerning manganese use in EV batteries, there are still issues with stability that have not been resolved.

The Congo has 70% of the world's cobalt supply, which is the most critical element in lithium batteries, as it keeps them from overheating and catching fire. If Russia gains access to the cobalt reserves in the Congo, they will have some influence on China's lithium battery exports, and thus the defense capabilities of most countries because the vast majority of modern military equipment is reliant on battery powered electricity. At the moment, China has most of the influence in this regard as the top lithium battery and lithium hydroxide exporter. If the Congo offers to the Russians access to its cobalt reserves, Russia will have similar leverage against the west that China has, and this will most likely pressure more western nations to be just as careful with Russia as they are with China as to not upset the economic arrangement. These dependencies seem to be the only deterrent to major wars breaking out.

At the moment all the purported Cobalt substitutes have yet to match cobalt when it comes to battery life and cycle life, both of which are imperative for US defense systems, prolonged missions, and long distance EV. While domestic/home use of cobalt free batteries may be feasible in the near term, the lower energy density of cobalt free batteries will leave our most critical industries having to rely for some time on batteries that have adequate cobalt. If China and Russia gain control over much of the world's cobalt reserves, US national defense will be economically reliant on those countries for the upkeep of their own defense capabilities. In this case, China and Russia would have more leverage in deterring reckless US foreign policy. Bibliography all sources below used for paraphrasing and explaining topic

Volume III: Russia's Komfort (How US impunity sets the standard)

(written on June 22, 2022)

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Introduction

This book explains why America's atrocities in the middle east are making it difficult for some Americans in the US to outright condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Also, prior to Amnesty's report on Ukraine which documented that Ukrainian soldiers were using civilian areas to set up bases, human rights organizations like Amnesty and western media were largely onesided in their coverage of the war, singling out Russia for war crimes in Ukraine despite having mentioned in their own reports evidence which shows that Ukrainian forces have also been deploying troops and military equipment into civilian areas, and firing rockets into areas where residential homes are located. Going back to 2014, Ukraine was the first in the conflict to launch missiles on residential areas. This occurred back in July of 2014, before Russia began arming the separatists. Obviously, the pro-Russian separatists knew in advance what they were getting not only themselves into, but also those they claim to represent in eastern Ukraine into. There were certainly precipitating factors mentioned as justification for separatism, like the Odessa fire which killed 48 ethnic Russians and ultimately fostered tensions in eastern Ukraine. This is the Russian perspective on this war.

Since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, those who have not followed the backdrop of the conflict could only ignorantly sum up the Russian element as "evil." Combine this with the blatant hypocrisy applied by the west in continuing to ignore their own heinous imperialist actions in the middle east, it's no wonder that a great deal of mistrust has arose in the US regarding reports on Ukraine. This war began in 2014 and escalated significantly on the heels of one event. The lack of accountability regarding the perpetrators of it fueled an ever increasing separatist movement. The event was the massacre of ethnic Russians in Odessa in 2014, a crime of which no one had been held to account. Prior to the tragedy, unrest broke out throughout Ukraine following then pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich's decision not to sign an economic deal with the EU which would have leaned Ukraine closer to the west and further away from its brother nation of Russia. This move on his part was met with protests all throughout Kyiv, which led to his ousting. Heightened tensions would follow between the extremist elements in Ukrainian-speaking populations and Russianspeaking populations in Ukraine, more ominously in the east and south where a majority of pro-Russians banded together in a wave of Russian nationalism. In the city of Odessa, confrontation between pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian groups erupted on May 2 nd of 2014 when pro-Russian groups counter-demonstrated against a pro-Ukrainian march. The pro-Russian demonstrators in Odessa had been accused back in

March of 2014 of attempting to separate Odessa from Ukraine, but the pro-Russians in Odessa never made the declaration and only insisted on more autonomy within Odessa, with Odessa becoming “Novorossiia.” On May 2nd, in Odessa, clashes between pro-Russian demonstrators and pro-Ukrainian demonstrators occurred in the streets. The beginning of the fighting happened when pro-Russian activists decided to disrupt a Ukrainian unity parade. As violence later ensued, two pro-Ukrainians and four pro-Russians would be killed in the subsequent fighting in which demonstrators from both sides were using petrol bombs, stones and firearms. Reports indicated that the first person to open fire was a pro-Russian activist with an AK47, which caused the first death during the encounter. Calls were then made on social media for pro-Ukrainian groups to attack the camp that the pro-Russian groups established at Kulikovo Pole in front of the Trade Union House. When the pro-Ukrainians arrived in numbers far greater than that of the pro-Russians, they destroyed the camp, setting it on fire, forcing the pro-Russian activists to take refuge inside the Trade Union Building. Numerous reports circulated that the occupiers of the building set it on fire inadvertently as both sides of the confrontation were throwing Molotov cocktails at each other, but the Kyiv Post reported that pro-Ukrainian groups were throwing the Molotov cocktails into the building through the front entrance, as well as through the windows on the second and fourth floors. Witnesses reported that many who tried to escape the fire were badly beaten by proUkrainian groups. Meanwhile, the police refused to intervene which led to 48 ethnic Russians, some of which were women and children, being killed in the fire. There has been absolutely no accountability by the perpetrators and no justice for the victims of that fire and many residents in Odessa are still harboring resentment even after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022. Two months after the Odessa Tragedy, the Ukrainian forces started launching unguided grad rockets into civilian areas in separatist-controlled Donetsk, an act of aggression which killed over a dozen more civilians. Human Rights Watch documented the event, but levied blame on both sides, despite having gathered and documented evidence that there were no separatist fighters or weapons in the residential areas that were struck. The Odessa tragedy in May of 2014, followed by Ukrainian forces’ indiscriminate use of unguided grad rockets into civilian areas in July of 2014 prompted Russia to get involved as that same month President Putin of Russia would vow to protect ethnic Russians at home and abroad.

The irony of the war in Ukraine in 2022 is that the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy was one the verge of addressing the grievances of the ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine, both on the language front and on the accountability issue regarding the tragedy

of Odessa. The country seemed to be on the verge of healing with a leader that is a native Russian speaker. But perhaps it was too late. Zelenskyy's decision to seek Ukraine's admittance into the multinational bloc called NATO, which is an organization that the international community has allowed to operate with impunity and unaccountability, ultimately triggered a Russian response. This has led to widespread residual effects and fear of nuclear escalation. Unfortunately for Ukraine, the overtures relayed to them by the United States just prior to February 24th, 2022, turned out to be nothing more than empty gestures.

Chapter 1: US Involvement and Hypocrisy

In mid-March 2022, Russian troops fired a number of missiles at a military facility in Yavotiv, Lyiv Oblast, which is near the Ukraine/Polish border. The long range missiles that hit a military facility in Lyiv were said to come from warplanes operating over the Black Sea. Russia at the start of their invasion attempted to disrupt Ukrainian air defense by striking a number military and civilian targets using long range missiles. A number of them were fired from Belarus and struck the Zhytomyr Airport, which was a civilian airport. The absence of air support from the US allowed Russia to wipe out a significant number of Ukraine's air defense facilities. The US, however, on March 1st made sure to establish a line of control between them and the Russian forces for the sake of ensuring that escalation between the US and Russia would not occur. Despite the initial lack of support from the west, Ukraine managed to destroy Russian aircraft, 10 of them on March 5th. As of March 6th, Ukraine destroyed 88 Russian war planes since the start of the war on February 24th. As to why the US would not send fighter jets to Ukraine, the reason given, according to a US defense official, was that Ukraine still had a significant majority of its military aircraft. Despite US refusal to help in this regard, Ukraine's use of surface to air missiles, combined with Russia's lack of precision-guided capability, left Russian air forces having to fly and launch airstrikes at lower altitudes leaving themselves open to being struck down by surface to air missile launchers. Ukrainian soldiers were shooting Russian planes down with launchers that could be mounted on the shoulder. Another factor that slowed the Russian advance was the inexperience of its pilots.

When it came to Naval warfare, control of the Black Sea was a primary objective. Turkey, however, shortly after the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, blocked Russia's access through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits. This came four days after it was reported that a Russian warship attacked and took control of Snake Island. Ukraine was able to counter attack with the help of US intelligence helping them locate Russian warships using drones. Russia, in the meantime, was able to capture roughly twelve or so Ukrainian ships in Berdiansk, while Ukraine reported to have destroyed a Russian ship that docked there. During the month of March, the UN International Maritime Organization, in light of food shortages a result of Ukraine being unable to ship its grain, tried to set up a maritime corridor that would provide safe access for merchant vessels. Ukraine has already mined the sea area near its ports to repel Russian ships, but at the same time restricted their own ability to export goods.

Russia's main Black Sea vessel, Moskva, was destroyed and sunk by Ukraine's Neptune anti-ship cruise missiles. Both the US and

Russia confirmed this. Russia, in response, fired missiles into Kyiv destroying the missile factory Luch Design Bureau, which was where the Neptune missiles were being manufactured. Nonetheless, Ukraine continued to resist the Russian naval assault and attempted to reclaim Snake Island in early May of 2022 and destroyed a Russian Serba-class landing craft operating in the Black Sea. They also fired a barrage of bombs on Snake Island where the Russian forces were.

One of the biggest scares of the Russian/Ukraine conflict was the possibility of Russia using tactical nuclear weapons in an act of desperation to appear victorious. In April, Russia began testing its Satan-2 missiles and threatened the US over its involvement in helping Ukraine. Because of Russia's lack of care during the assault on Zaporizhzhia and Chrenobyl which led to the nuclear plant catching fire at Zaporizhzhia after Russia fired missiles near its location, President Zelenskyy urged the international community to reassess whether Russia should be allowed to continue its development of nuclear resources. Zelenskyy urged for a consensus that Russia's nuclear supply be managed at the international level. This was followed by Germany sending tanks to Ukraine, to which after evoked more threats from Russia, threats which declared the possibility of a preemptive nuclear strike against nations aiding Ukraine during the war. Russia has the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons in the world. Russia's threats to use nuclear weapons led to the resignation of Boris Bondarev, a Russian diplomat.

Zelenskyy's decision to weaponize civilians against the Russian invasion was questioned in some media circles like the Washington Post, fearing it would escalate the damage. Many residents in Ukraine volunteered to fight for the Ukrainian defense force, while others made Molotov cocktails meant to be used against Russian forces. Civilians also knocked down Russian road signs in order to confuse Russian troops as to their exact location. There were also street protests against Russian forces occupying certain parts of Ukraine, which often escalated into physical and verbal violence. Some protesters were filming the Russian troops and recording their ID numbers. Other civilians began forming guerrilla units, which was encouraged by the Ukrainian defense forces. In response to civilian confrontation, Russian troops would fire their guns into the air or in some cases, in the direction of the protesters. Some of the demonstrators were detained and others executed. After residents began filming the location of Russian troops and equipment and sending them to Ukrainian forces for the sake of facilitating attacks, they became considered by the Russian forces as combatants actively taking part in hostilities. From there, things escalated quickly and Russian troops began going door to door in residential areas, confiscating cell phones and arresting people who took pictures of Russian tanks.

Both the United States and International Human Rights organizations have to take responsibility for this paradigm of unaccountably applied by countries ranked in the higher echelons of military capability. While historically, the enforcement of applying reprisals against nations in violation of human rights has been largely absent, the biggest error in this generation has not so much been in terms enforcing international regulations, but applying such standards in a uniform manner. The most egregious example of this is taking place now during the Russia/Ukraine war. International organizations have come out and initiated investigations into Russia's actions in Ukraine and called for other international organizations to follow suit, which was something largely absent during the US invasion of Iraq, both during and after, as many international human rights organizations such as the Human Rights Watch have only gone so far as to urge the United States to conduct internal investigations, despite knowing the fact that the US invasion of Iraq was illegal and unjustified. Whereas now, under similar circumstances, during the Russia/Ukraine war, international organizations have openly called for the international community to investigate and prosecute Russia for war crimes. Unlike inquires into US war crimes in the middle east, where human rights investigators were sure to implicate both sides in terms of not doing enough to keep civilians safe from the crossfire, many perhaps with the exception of Amnesty International, have not investigated any role Ukrainian forces may have had in endangering the civilian population. This lack of thoroughness in applying the investigative process will give NATO and the US the green light to continue disregarding international human rights standards, and the international human rights organizations will have to take some of the blame for this. In order to circumvent this, Russia must reestablish a concordance with Amnesty International, whom has shown that it will conduct a thorough analysis when necessary. The importance of thorough analysis is for the protection of civilians in nations who do not support war, nor support fighting in it. This was clear during Russia's invasion of Ukraine since it was the case that many Ukrainian men were trying to leave the country, but were forced to stay and fight. Furthermore, during the Russia/Ukraine war, international organizations have failed to distinguish provocateurs—whose only purpose for attending a peaceful public demonstration was to take actions that would only provoke unrest, from that of the ordinary civilian whose only objective was peace and life. Those demonstrators who went out and willfully engaged in hostilities with the occupiers in residential areas, thus endangering the civilian population, were never factored into the investigative framework, which justified, at least from the vantage point of human rights organizations, concluding that Russia ordered civilians to be killed. Keep in mind that the international laws of war only apply

from the commencement of hostilities, not the circumstances surrounding the decision to launch a military operation—whether justified or not. Human Rights is not a new dynamic in world affairs. The concept has been around since the beginning of time. The enforcement, however, has never really held firm for any significant length of time. In many cases, justice for victims of war crimes could only be carried out on perpetrators after there was regime change in the country of the officials that were responsible for human rights violations. For example, if Germany was not defeated in World War II, there would have been no Nuremberg Trials to prosecute Nazi officials responsible for genocide and human rights violations. This is why many world powers are afraid of the ICC because essentially issuing an arrest warrant for sitting government officials is ultimately a call for regime change, something which separatist groups in many countries are eager to carry out. Historically, nations that were often more advanced and militarily adept were the ones that often carried out the most egregious violations of human rights. Germany and Japan slaughtered millions of civilians during World War II, while the US has carried out a vast number of war crimes in Iraq, the middle east, and Africa. In all three cases, the nations involved were considered the most civilized and advanced of their era. From 2003 to 2022, the United States, during their illegal occupation of Iraq, has carried out numerous violations of human rights such as conducting strikes on civilian population using high-powered explosives. There were rapes, torture, as well as mistreatment of prisoners, children, and refugees. Much of these allegations have been verified via direct footage, interviews with witnesses, Wikileaks reports, and compiled in a number of research works like the one published by Noor-ul-Ain Khawaja called Human Rights Violations Under US Occupation in Iraq: An Analysis.

Scores of civilians were killed by US forces during their occupation of Iraq. Some were killed by direct gunfire from US ground troops, others were killed by airstrikes conducted by the US Air Forces. Three of the most violent incidents concerning the mass murder of Iraqi civilians occurred in Fallujah, Haditha, and Nisour Square. Throughout the Iraq War, it has been documented that the US fired depleted uranium weapons into civilian areas, destroying infrastructure. It also been documented that the US has used cluster munitions, as well as white phosphorous. In addition. the US admitted, after numerous denials, that they have used napalm bombs, which is an incendiary substance banned by the United Nations for use in warfare since 1980. Wikileaks confirmed that the US had roughly 2836 chemical weapons as part of its arsenal in Iraq during the war. Russia during its invasion of Ukraine as of June 11th 2022 has not used any chemical weapons. CS gas which is banned for use in warfare was also used by the US during the Iraq war, which violated

Article I of Convention on Chemical Weapons.

Depleted Uranium bombs were dropped via air strikes in Iraq on civilian areas by both US and UK forces, causing the air to fill up with intense radiation that can cause serious physiological problems like cancer, birth defects, gene damage and neurological problems. In the first year of the war between 2003 and 2004, according to a study published by the Lancet Journal, US forces killed roughly 100,000 civilians in Iraq, half being women and children. Most of the civilians killed died from airstrikes carried out by US-led forces. The study sampled 33 neighborhoods in Iraq that were most representative of the whole population, and concluded that the leading cause of the death had gone from mostly other typical causes like heart attack and stroke to overwhelmingly death as a result of violence. The study found that an Iraqi's risk of death from military artillery and violence was astronomically higher than it was before the US invaded, 58 times higher in fact. The study was heavily peer-reviewed and edited and began to cast doubt on the US military's conduct during the war. It was led by Les Roberts from the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who had around five doctors conduct interviews in 988 households, gathering data with a survey and putting themselves in danger during the process. The interviews compiled data given to them by members of the Iraqi households who reported the number of births and deaths in their family, both 14 months before and 14 months after the US invasion of their country. While some did not present death certificates, circumstances surrounding the information given in those cases, as well as the cultural backdrop was such that the interviewers ultimately considered that it was unlikely they were fabricating the information. The study showed that infant mortality rose, going from 29 deaths per 1000 births 14 months before the war, to 57 deaths per 1000 live births 14 months after the war started. This was attributed to women being unable to access hospitals during war, and thus having to deliver the baby without the sufficient medical supervision. The biggest increase was that of violent death, which the study attributed mostly to be caused by airstrikes, as opposed to hostility from ground forces. They did record three incidents of civilians being killed at checkpoints by gunfire from ground troops, which was minute compared to the devastation caused by airstrikes. The cases recorded which did involve direct fire from US troops involved the victim being mistaken for a combatant. The study documented that US troops did apologize directly to the families in those cases. The sample of 58 incidents of violent death recorded by the study were all caused by aerial strikes, the worst being in Fallujah, where 75% of the violent deaths took place, based on the sample. Much like the theater bombing in March of 2022 that Russia provided no information on in terms of number of casualties, the US forces in Iraq in the first year

did not assess body count as well. One of the first cases of the mass killing of Iraqi civilians carried out by US forces occurred in Fallujah, where civilians were killed en masse by US forces with airstrikes, gunfire, and chemical weapons between 2003 and 2005. According to some estimates, altogether during the US attack on Fallujah between 2003 and 2004, 6000 people were killed, mostly civilians which included women and children. There was photographic evidence which showed residents whose skin had been completely dissolved. A number of residents reported that US forces crushed the wounded by rolling over them with tanks, and they also reported that those looking to provide aid were shot. The Iraq Red crescent was not allowed into the city to provide aid and doctors were restricted from performing emergency surgeries on their patients. These were gross violations of the Geneva convention and many of these crimes perpetrated by US forces were documented in “Fallujah, The Hidden Massacre” which is a documentary film by Sigfrido Ranucci and Maurizio Torrealta.

The dynamic which led to the massacre in Fallujah is likely similar to how things escalated in Kyiv upon the Russian forces entering the city. Back in April of 2003, after the US Military during their unjustified occupation of Fallujah, no different than Russia’s occupation of Kyiv, imposed a curfew for the residents living there, the residents protested. Just prior, the US forces had occupied a school and the residents of Fallujah wanted the troops to vacate the school so that it could reopen. Much like Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in areas where Russian forces occupied certain parts without engaging in hostilities on the residents, the US forces in the case of their occupation of Fallujah did the same. In both cases, the occupying military force was eventually confronted by the residents living there. On April 28, 2003, roughly 200 Iraqi residents assembled outside the school where the US forces were stationed at the time. After the protesters became more and more agitated, US forces threw smoke into the crowd in order to repel them. When things escalated, according to the testimony of US forces, someone from the crowd sparked the violence when he opened fire on US soldiers, which caused US forces to return fire and ultimately kill 17 Iraqi civilians in the process. 70 others suffered serious wounds. Human Rights Watch later confirmed that no Iraqis had fired upon US soldiers during the confrontation. Two days later when protesters gathered outside of a US base at the former Ba’ath party headquarters, US forces shot 3 protesters and subsequently called in more reinforcements to Fallujah. In that case, the US also maintained that the protesters fired first. Meanwhile, seeing that things were escalating, US service members in Fallujah began going around confiscating motor bikes from Iraqi residents in the area, for the sake of mitigating the threat of terror against US military personnel. In

June of 2003, residents-turned-insurgents in Fallujah began firing on US military in response to their unjustified invasion of the country, no different than Ukrainians in Kyiv against the Russian occupiers. In June, a US Service member was killed when the vehicle he was in was hit by an RPG round. Six other US military personnel sustained injuries. This led to heightened hostilities that would have dangerous implications for civilians in the area. In late June, a mosque was bombed, killing the imam and eight others. Residents accused the US of carrying out the bombing, but the US insisted it was the insurgents who did it by accident as they were making bombs nearby. Later in February 2004, insurgents had then started attacking US military convoys carrying high level US commanders, and firing upon them with RPGs from the rooftops in the surrounding areas. RPGs were also found in residential buildings in Mariupol in April of 2022 after the Russian siege of the city. Another similarity is how the US portrayed resistance to their invasion with how the Russian troops portrayed resistance to their invasion of Ukraine—the US relegated those resisting their invasion to being insurgents linked to Al-Qaeda, while Russia considered those resisting their invasion as belonging to Neo-Nazi groups. Following the attacks on US servicemen in Iraq, Fallujah was quickly consumed by a strong guerrilla presence which endangered civilians there. This guerrilla aspect in Kyiv and other parts of Ukraine during the Russian invasion in 2022 was strongly encouraged by Ukrainian officials. This leads one to ask if this was wise, and whether or not the Ukrainians are more justified to attack occupying forces than the Iraqis were in Fallujah back in 2004 when the US launched an unjustified invasion of their country. We can see the difference in western media's coverage of the two events. The resistors to US occupation in Iraq were seen as terrorists, while the resistors in Ukraine to Russian occupiers are viewed as freedom fighters.

Due to the rising guerrilla warfare in Fallujah against US troops, US forces had to briefly withdraw in March of 2004, leaving only a few personnel to reassert foothold over the city every now and then. However, after five members of a combat engineer team—sent out to ensure a safe passage route for the US 82nd Airborne and Blackwater forces—were killed by a roadside bomb on their way to Fallujah, the nature of the operations became set to change considerably. This was followed by the killing of four armed US contractors traveling in their SUV to make a delivery to food services. They were hit by insurgent gunfire before being decimated with a grenade that insurgent threw into their SUV. This was followed by a mob who set the bodies of the contractors on fire before dragging them through the streets and hanging them over a bridge at the Euphrates. Thus, all the civilian friendly strategies applied by the US after their initial advance into Fallujah had to be abandoned, and US forces would then be ordered

to conduct a more full scale assault to clear out the guerrillas. It is likely that the Russian forces followed a similar dynamic in many parts of Ukraine. Also interesting to note is that the US would call this offensive aimed at clearing out the guerrillas, a “pacification” of the city. Somewhat similar to how Russian President Putin called his military operation in Ukraine a “denazification,”

On April 1st 2004, The US began a major assault on Fallujah, launching air strikes that destroyed four residential homes. On the 5th of April, US forces imposed a curfew to all residents and encouraged them to help them identify the perpetrators of the Blackwater killings. (Russian troops in Bucha asked residents there to help them find the nazis) The bombing raids subsequently carried out by US forces killed numerous insurgents as well as civilians. It had been estimated that just in the first few days of April of 2004, 300 Iraqi civilians had been killed. By the beginning of May, it was estimated that close to 600 civilians were killed during that first battle at Fallujah.

The second battle at Fallujah(Operation Phantom Fury) started in November of 2004 and lasted until December 24, 2004. During this operation, US forces went door to door looking for insurgents, very similar to how the Russians went door to door in Bucha looking for Nazis. In the 2005 documentary, "Fallujah, The Hidden Massacre." a former US soldier named Jeff Englehart, who was deployed to Fallujah at the time, revealed that he was told that every one walking outside was an enemy combatant. (This is also likely what happened in Bucha—Russian troops were told that anyone walking outside was an enemy combatant) Another US soldier, Ross Caputi, who fought during the battle recounted tactics that involved firing indiscriminately into residential homes before seeing who was inside, for fear that there could be insurgents there. This is exactly similar to the tactic used by the Russian forces in Bucha, as witnessed by one of the residents there. In both cases of Iraq and Bucha, civilians were killed in the process. Caputi, in an interview with CNN, said that "These tactics were meant to keep us safe. But I learned later that tens of thousands of civilians were still hiding in their houses during the operation, so these tactics would have put them in a lot of danger. ...The hardship that Phantom Fury imposed on Fallujans and the destruction it caused made me feel really ashamed of what we were doing." According to the Red Cross, 800 civilians were killed during the battle, while Iraqi non-profit groups estimated that close to 6000 Iraqi civilians were killed.

Another massacre that occurred during the US invasion of Iraq was the Haditha massacre which killed 24 Iraqi civilians. It occurred on November 19, 2005 when a group of US Marines carried out summary executions of men, women, children, and the elderly, all shot at point blank range. The motive was said to be in response to the

killing of Lance Corporal Miguel Terrazas who was killed during an IED attack on a US Marine convoy. After the incident, a false report was filed stating that the explosion killed 15 civilians, while eight insurgents were killed as the Marines subsequently opened fire. After an investigation carried out by the Pentagon which showed substantial evidence that the Marines carried out summary executions of Iraqi civilians, those involved in the massacre were later indicted on charges of murder. However, in 2008, only one Marine was penalized for the crimes. The others had the charges dropped. The one penalized who had to stand trial was only given a demotion in rank as part of a plea deal in 2012 in which the murder charge would be dropped. No one was jailed and no justice was granted to the victims.

Prior to the massacre, US forces were present around Haditha for the purpose of keeping watch over a Dam that provided hydroelectric power. There had been numerous flare ups of insurgent violence since the start of the war, as insurgents against occupation attacked US troops regularly in that area. When a convoy of US Marines was attacked via roadside bomb placed along their route in 2005, one of the US servicemen driving one of the vehicles in the convoy was killed. The other two present in the vehicle with him suffered serious injuries, but survived. One of them was allowed to return to active duty.

Immediately following the attack, other members of the convoy began a furious assault on civilians in the area. One Iraqi man and four Iraqi teenagers who were in a white taxi cab near the attack were forced out and shot dead by Staff Sgt Frank Wuterich. According to two Iraqi soldiers and a Marine, they had been forced to stand in a line outside the taxi cab with their hands up before being shot and killed by Wuterich, who later said that he felt threatened by them. The Marines reported to have heard gunfire coming from all sides, and suspected some of it to be coming from behind the white taxi as it drove up near the area. Another Marine, Sgt. Sanick Dela Cruz, present at the time told investigators that after Staff Sgt. Wuterich opened fire on the victims, he (Dela Cruz) then urinated on their dead bodies out of anger for what happened to Terrazas (the driver that was killed by the IED). Dela Cruz was also forthright about the clear intent to kill civilians, telling investigators: "As I crossed the median I saw one of the Iraqi civilians, who was standing in the center of the line, drop to the ground.....Immediately afterwards another Iraqi standing by him raised his hands to his head. I then heard other small arms fire and looked to my left and saw Sgt. Wuterich kneeling on one knee and shooting his M16 in the direction of the Iraqi civilians."

When another Marine, Lieutenant William Kallop, the platoon commander, arrived on the scene, he reported that they encountered gun fire coming from one of the residential homes nearby shortly

after the IED attack. In response, after Cpl Hector A. Salinas said he could see someone was firing the shots on the south part of the road, Kallop ordered Staff Sgt Wuterich to move into area and “clear south”. Using tactics of first throwing grenades and firing indiscriminately into the houses before entering, Wuterich and three other Marines, Salinas, Tatum and Lance Cpl. Humberto M. Mendoza, ended up killing 19 more civilians in the process, seven of which were children. At the first home that the US soldiers engaged, they tried to enter via the kitchen, Tatum reported to investigators that he thought he heard what sounded like an AK-47 being set to open fire, so he threw grenades into the home. A 37 year old man named Walid Hasan, who was inside the home, was killed. And so was 66 year old Khamisa Ali, who was killed in the hallway area. Four more in the home at the time were killed by grenades and gunfire. The nine year old girl living there whose name was Iman Walid AbdulHamid said that the Marines were shooting into all the rooms of the house. After they killed the civilians in the first house, the Marines rushed into the second house believing that the suspected gunman fled there. Mendoza told investigators that the same protocol used on the first house was applied to the second home. He also admitted to killing 43 year old Yunis Rasif through the kitchen door. When the Marines entered the house, they went to the bedroom and before looking inside they threw grenades in the room and opened fire into it, killing all the women and children inside. Despite carrying out the slaughter, Tatum insisted that he felt threatened at the time and that he was simply reacting based on that fear, telling investigators that he did not fire with the intent to kill civilians. One can presume that the Russians who carried out the exact same mode of operation in Bucha will likely say the same thing, which will put international war crimes investigators on the spot when they have to explain the difference between the massacre at Haditha and the massacre at Bucha. It was later revealed that Marines had gone to a 3rd and 4th house, after seeing men who were staring at them suspiciously. According to some Iraqi witnesses, the Marines separated the men from the women at the homes before forcing the men into the fourth house and executing them.

According to Wuterich, it was standard protocol to fire into buildings deemed hostile and that he was only following orders based on that. Marines were not required to risk their lives by identifying individual targets as threats when a structure is deemed hostile. Kallop testified that “Once you declare a building hostile, you can destroy it with all means at your disposal.” It is likely that the Russian military has this same policy. There was a lot of criticism against the US military because they only responded to the allegations of Marines killing civilians in Haditha after Time magazine began reporting about the incident. Initially, US Marine officials felt the incident was

no different than other situations in which civilian casualties occurred. Maj. Gen. Richard A. Huck believed that the allegations were lies perpetrated by the insurgents in order to smear the reputation of the US military. Compare that to Russia's initial reaction to allegations of war crimes committed by Russian soldiers in Bucha, when Russian officials insisted that the incident was staged. In the case of the Haditha massacre, other Marine officers insisted that their men were not murderers. Many in the Kremlin likely have this same sentiment about their own soldiers.

In terms of allegations that Marine officers were attempting to cover up the incident, Dela Cruz told investigators that Staff Sgt Wuterich asked him to support reports that the men from the taxi were trying to escape, but those investigators on the scene saw no evidence that a large scale cover-up was attempted.

In December of 2006, the US Military charged Frank Wuterich, Sanick P. Dela Cruz, James Donahue and Stephen Tatum with unpremeditated murder. Frank Wuterich had been charged with 12 counts of unpremeditated murder. Even after it was concluded that there were no weapons in the taxi nor insurgents in the first two houses that came under attack, all charges were dropped against the Marines in 2008. Wuterich who was the only one to face a trial, was allowed a plea deal in 2012 to plead guilty to dereliction of duty and receive a fine and a penalty of demotion in rank, while charges of manslaughter would be dropped. The lack of disciplinary action by US military in connection to the Haditha massacre enabled other acts of violence against civilians to be carried out with impunity. Similar atrocities occurred later in Ishaqi near Balad, Qaim, Taal Al Jal, Mukaradeeb, Hamdaniyah, Samarra and Salahuddin. Amnesty International reported in 2011 that the number of civilian killed individually by US forces between 2004 and 2009 totaled around 66,000.

Another massacre carried out by US troops in Iraq was at Nisour Square in Baghdad when guards from the BlackWater group, a US security contractor, shot and killed 17 unarmed civilians, including a nine year old boy. All who stood trial in connection with the incident were either acquitted or eventually pardoned by the President of the United States. The incident took place on September 16, 2007 when BlackWater Security Consulting employees responded to reports of an explosion near where US and Iraqi officials were conferencing. A tactical unit in a convoy of 4 trucks consisting of 19 Blackwater employees arrived on the scene and got into formation on the south side of Nisour Square to provide safe evacuation passage for US officials as well as other BlackWater employees protecting them. Shortly thereafter, when a car was seen driving towards them, the unit began firing at civilians, killing 17 of them in the process. Later, during trial in 2014, the BlackWater employees said they believed that

the approaching car was a hostile threat and thus began shooting in the name of self-defense. The car, a Kia sedan, was later destroyed with a grenade. Iraqi government officials and US Military officials had different accounts of the incident. The Iraqi government reported that the approaching car was inhabited by a woman and her adult son. They were driving on the wrong side of the road and ignored the police whistle to allow the convoy of BlackWater employees to pass thru. Subsequently, after firing a warning shot, the BlackWater team, as well as its helicopters, opened fire on the car killing the woman and her adult son. When the team threw stun grenades to clear the area, Iraqi police and soldiers mistook it for frag grenades and then began firing at the BlackWater team, which led to BlackWater employees opening fire.

The US Military account of the incident reported that the approaching car was ignoring all warnings being given which led BlackWater employees to shoot at the car. When Iraqi police attempted to go and help the passengers inside the vehicle, the BlackWater employees were under the impression that the Iraqi policemen were trying to push the car towards the BlackWater unit, which led to BlackWater employees believing that it was a car bomb, to which caused them to open fire at the car, killing both the passengers and the Iraqi policemen. Immediately after, other Iraqi police began to fire upon the BlackWater unit.

According to a New York Times report in 2007, one of the BlackWater employees during the chaos continued to fire in the direction of civilians, even after ceasefire was ordered. And later, three BlackWater guards said that they believed that the shootings were not justified. A joint American-Iraqi investigation ensued and found that BlackWater was responsible for the killing of 17 unarmed Iraqi civilians after opening fire without provocation. An October 2007 US military report concluded that none of the Iraqi police or soldiers fired back at the BlackWater guards. The UN considered the BlackWater contractors as “mercenaries” and in violation of the international law. Criminal charges of 14 counts of manslaughter were filed against five BlackWater employees, but despite conclusive evidence, a U.S. judge dropped all charges against the BlackWater security firm in 2010. In 2011, the charges were reinstated by a federal appeals court panel, and in 2013, the charges for one of the accused were dropped. The rest went to trial in 2014 and were found guilty. One was given a life sentence, while the other three were to serve 30 years in prison. In 2020, all four were granted an official presidential pardon by the President of the United States and released from prison. The UN Human Rights Office warned that such would only enable other entities to carry out similar crimes with impunity.

BlackWater not only got away with the Nisour Square massacre, but others violent incidents that transpired prior to it. A year before

in 2006, a BlackWater sniper opened fire from the roof of the building belonging to the Iraqi Justice Ministry and killed three civilians. The incident was deemed justified and an act of self-defense. In December of 2006, a Black Water employee killed the bodyguard of Iraq's Vice President, but suffered no legal reprisals.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported in 2004 that the occupying forces were responsible for enforced disappearances after arresting and detaining certain individuals in Iraq, not telling the family where they were taken. Just within the city of Fallujah, 280 persons were declared missing, all confirmed by name and picture ID.

Rapes and murders were also perpetrated by US soldiers in Iraq. In 2006, a group of US servicemen who were all intoxicated and wearing regular clothes and masks, invaded a home where an Iraqi family was residing. One of the soldiers assumed the role of standing guard at the checkpoint to keep a look out for anyone else that could be in the area. After the US soldiers, broke into the home, they all raped a 14 year old girl named Abeer Kassem Hamza al-Janabi, while killing her mother, father, and sister. After they finished raping the girl, they shot her dead as well, cracked her skull and then incinerated her body. However, in this case, the US did investigate and prosecute all involved. The families of the victims, however, expected a more harsh penalty such as the death penalty. Before the investigation, the incident was covered up by the perpetrators who tried to blame the act on Sunni insurgents.

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the US had called upon the International Criminal Court to prosecute Russia for war crimes committed in Ukraine. The declaration evoked charges from the public that the United States were hypocrites for encouraging an ICC investigation into Russia's actions in Ukraine, while blocking the ICC from investigating their crimes in Afghanistan, where US airstrikes killed scores of civilians. The US does not recognize the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, which was first formed in 1998 through an international consensus called the Rome Statute. Back then, the US helped facilitate the agreement and initial formation of the ICC, but refused to officially join for fear that the prosecutor for the ICC would wield an enormous level of influence and power, possibly conducting investigations based on political affiliation. Discourse about the establishment of an international treaty dealing with war crimes was prevalent in political circles after the Nuremberg Trials, and Congress during the decade of the 1990s approved a number of resolutions that urged for an international investigative body. When the US became concerned about the level of power the ICC could wield, they ended up voting against the Rome Statute. Russia also does not recognize the jurisdiction of the ICC, but nonetheless the ICC is conducting

investigations into Russia's actions in Ukraine and whether or not they constitute war crimes. Meanwhile, the US is encouraging the ICC to carry on, even while not recognizing ICC jurisdiction for fear of opening itself up to being investigated for war crimes in the middle east. Still and all, if the US wanted to get involved in prosecuting Russia, they would have to navigate around US legislation which largely prohibits the US from cooperating with the ICC. But the US supports ICC investigation into crimes that are not being investigated by the nation accused. The US has investigated a number of its own war crimes, but in most significant incidents, the suspects had the charges dropped or were acquitted. Russia may follow suit and conduct investigations into what occurred in Bucha and Mariupol and simply either drop the charges against the accused Russian soldiers or carry out a light sentence followed by a presidential pardon. As a side note, the US did support the ICC's investigation of genocide in Sudan during the Bush administration.

The US fear of the ICC conducting investigations based on a political motive ironically worked out in favor of the US when it came to Afghanistan. The ICC decided in October of 2021 to conduct a probe into the war crimes committed by the Taliban and ISIS-k, and at the same time scale down its investigation into crimes committed by the US and its allies in Afghanistan. The UK non-profit group Airwars estimated that US airstrikes killed between 22,000 and 48,000 civilians in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria and other major conflict zones in the middle east and Africa between 2001 and 2020. Regardless of that statistic, just as an investigation by the ICC into crimes committed by all parties in Afghanistan since 2003 was getting ready to start, the probe was suddenly suspended because the crimes committed by the Taliban and ISIS-k were considered by the ICC to be more egregious than those carried out by the US and its allies. The decision ultimately hurt the credibility of the ICC and made it appear as though the court has a western bias and is simply an instrument of the west. On top of that, the ICC has opened inquiries into war crimes committed by Russia and Israel, but largely looked the other way when it came to war crimes carried out by US and UK forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. This, despite the fact that the US has been very hostile towards the ICC, excoriating them for attempting to not only investigate the US for war crimes, but also for launching investigations into the military actions carried out by its ally Israel. Both nations insist that they never intended to target civilians, which is why Israel is all the more critical of the moral equivalence insinuated by ICC inquiries into Israel's activities in Palestinian territories-- Hamas, one of Israel's main adversaries, fires rockets directly at civilians with the intent to kill civilians, all of which is obvious to the human eye as videos capture rockets being fired en masse from Gaza into Israeli territory. Were it not for the Iron Dome,

millions more in both Israel and Gaza would have perished. Human rights organizations, however, have insisted that war crimes by one nation during a conflict does not justify war crimes by the other. Moreover, when it comes to US suspicions of the ICC, suspicions that the prosecutor could be swayed by politics, the actual instance of such happening worked out in favor of the US, not against it. The ICC decision not to fully investigate the US for war crimes was right on the heels of the US drone strike that killed an Afghan family of ten. Many believe had the New York Times not reported it, the US would have kept the incident under wraps.

The ICC started its operations in 2002 just after the US invaded Afghanistan, one of the nations that voted for the Rome Statue, a treaty that initiated the ICC. Afghanistan had been mired in war for years, starting back in the 70s when the Soviets occupied the country to protect that Afghan communist government there. It was estimated that over a million Afghans were killed during that time. This was followed by another violent conflict between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance in the years leading up to 9/11. Shortly after the ICC operations had gone into effect, the US immediately passed legislation to protect itself from international war crimes investigation and prosecution, as well as set up agreements with other countries in which they would also refuse to recognize the jurisdiction of the court. Most of the ICC's crackdown on war crimes were initially in Africa, but after public pressure, they began probing such cases outside of Africa and began a preliminary investigation into war crimes that took place in Afghanistan after 2002 when the ICC first began its operations. Many were beginning to believe that the ICC feared superpower nations. The ICC can investigate war crimes if one of the member nations calls for an investigation. They can also investigate in places that are referred to them by the UN Security Council. The third process by which ICC investigations can be initiated is when suspected war crimes occur in the nation of one of its member countries. Such was the case for the ICC attempt to launch a probe in Afghanistan. The US officials, however, have always insisted that its refusal to recognize the jurisdiction of the ICC was a bipartisan consensus. This served to stall the process, and when in 2017, the ICC began taking strong measures to get the court to grant permission to the ICC to investigate US crimes in Afghanistan, the pretrial chamber that was in charge of granting authorization to investigate prohibited the ICC from conducting the probe. It was clear that the decision was motivated as a result of pressure and intimidation from US officials. The national security advisor to the US president advised the president to impose sanctions against ICC officials as well as prohibit them from entering the US if they try to move forward with a probe. Despite the threats, the ICC did initially move forward with the Afghanistan investigation in March of 2020,

which led to the US president imposing sanctions on two officials of the ICC. The US also threatened to prosecute ICC officials in US courts if they tried to bring charges against Americans. This was followed by US pressure on the US-backed Afghan government to oppose the ICC investigation and launch its own investigation in order to stifle the ICC probe. The ICC usually acquiesces to the policies within the nation state, and thus halted their Afghanistan probe, as well as the probe into CIA black sites which were secret prisons in Lithuania, Poland, and Romania where tortures allegedly took place. The culture of impunity largely fostered by the ICC in succumbing to US pressure gives way to and emboldens other nations to act without regard for consequences or condemnation. The ICC attempted to justify their decision to downscale the war crimes investigation by citing the heinousness of crimes carried out by ISIS-k and the Taliban against Afghan civilians, stating that their crimes warranted for greater resources to be applied to an investigation of their actions, as opposed to one that probes US actions in Afghanistan. Many consider US officials as hypocritical in their condemnation of Russia for invading Ukraine when they themselves actively subverted attempts by the ICC to hold them accountable for atrocities identical to the ones carried out by the Russian forces in Ukraine. Little to no international condemnation of the US for their crimes in the middle east is likely one of the factors that emboldened Russia to assert their geopolitical interests with impunity as well, giving credence to “might” essentially making “right.”

The ICC has attempted to make up for their shortcomings in condemning superpowers like the United States by immediately attempting to open a probe into Russia’s actions in Ukraine just days after Russia’s invasion of the country on February 24, 2022. But this action on the part of the ICC was not met with respect, at least not from the non-western areas of the world. It was followed up with even more indignation from victims of US atrocities in the middle east and Africa in regards to how the US was being allowed to get away with crimes that the ICC is seeking to prosecute Russia for. One can presume that the ICC and other human rights organizations are not simply pro-western, but more along the lines of pro-western media. At the moment, the western media in recent years has for the most part taken a contrarian stance to GOP politics in America, due to the election of Donald Trump in 2016. In an effort to alleviate embarrassment and distance themselves from the movement that Trump had surrounding him at that time, the media would often side against any perspective they felt was upheld by the conservative outlook. Since 2016, it was heavily perceived that the GOP was both pro-Russian and proIsrael. Donald Trump, during his tenure, was both open about his admiration of Russian President Putin and open about his support for the state of Israel. However, back in 2017, when

President Trump approved sending lethal military aid to Ukraine in a move that didn't fit the Trump/pro-Russia narrative, western media agencies like Reuters condemned it. They published an article in 2017 disapproving of the decision to arm Ukraine. The commentary by Daniel DePetris was entitled "Why the U.S. shouldn't send arms to Ukraine." There were also many reports among western media that Ukraine had a neo-nazi problem. But after 2019, when the quid-pro-quo scandal occurred with Trump threatening to cut off lethal aid to Ukraine, the media shifted their stance on Ukraine in order to remain contrary to the GOP. The contrarianism was also applied by western media stance on Israel. Prior to Trump, the western media was heavily pro-Israel, but after 2017 when Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, the western media began to shift against Israel. Ultimately, the contrarianism would set the left-leaning media against Russia and Israel, leading to human rights organizations following suit. In 2021, following the Gaza War, the media largely blamed Israel for the conflict, while UN human rights groups would create a commission which placed responsibility for the Gaza conflict on Israel's treatment of Palestinians, and not Hamas's insistence on firing rockets willfully and indiscriminately into Israeli territories. The ICC is also attempting to launch a war crimes probe into Israel's military operations. This goes to show how powerful the media is when it comes to not only controlling the narrative, but also in getting the international community to follow along. Furthermore, we can see how the media's support of democratic principles has shielded the US from any war crimes investigation, seeing that as of 2021, the US administration is led by a democratic head of state.

Chapter 2: International Humanitarian Law

Under International humanitarian law(IHL), all sides of an armed conflict are bound to regulations intended to protect the civilian population. But human rights organizations investigating areas of conflict in Ukraine have failed to approach the matter with a hardline impartiality integral towards getting both sides of the conflict to evaluate the civilian costs. Instead, groups like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, while noting violations on the part of the Ukrainian army in not taking enough precaution when it comes to protecting the civilian population, still chose to single out the occupying Russian force as the sole perpetrator of civilian casualties. The rules of IHL are meant to extract and protect the civilian population from active hostilities, as well as persuade parties in the conflict to keep the civilian population out of the military framework. While not all civilian casualties are considered a war crime, those deaths and severe injuries that occur in civilian populations among civilians usually indicates that either one party in the conflict is perpetrating the atrocities, or both parties are launching strikes from residential neighborhoods, thus evoking return fire, leaving civilians caught in between the shelling. The latter has been the case in Ukraine both since the beginning of the invasion and since 2014 when the Donbas conflict began, and human rights groups are largely aware of this, but continue to downplay how one side of the conflict is also responsible for imperiling residential areas. When it comes to human rights organizations, the importance of impartiality cannot be understated because when the conflict settles down, insurgencies will want to persuade the population to continue fighting. This is the case in Gaza, where militant groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad's sole purpose is to reclaim all of Israel for the Palestinians. Yet in those cases, at least in years prior to Amnesty International's Apartheid report castigating the state of Israel and recommending that aid which ensures their security be cut off, human rights organizations were very thorough in reporting how both sides of the conflict are endangering and killing civilians. But in the case of Ukraine, the reports lean heavily towards the western sentiment that condemns the Russian invasion of Ukraine and justifies Ukraine's effort to reclaim lost territory regardless of the civilian population. In this sense, human rights investigators have to be careful not to insinuate that the nation under occupation has every justification to do everything in its power to reclaim lost territory no matter how much it endangers the civilian population. Reporting in such a manner could give insurgent groups around the world the impetus to dial up their attacks if they see that Ukrainian forces are allotted a certain pass when it comes to endangering residential areas. Remnant insurgencies in Iraq could also see the report on Ukraine as

justification for them to continue trying to reclaim Iraq irrespective of the civilian population.

This book shows how US military tactics in Iraq are near identical to Russia's tactics in Ukraine, which perhaps indicate that the US and Russia follow a similar military protocol. Many of the weapons used in the war in Ukraine are unguided missiles and cluster bombs which are banned in a number of international treaties, but groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have yet to launch meaningful investigations into Ukraine's use of such weapons in civilian areas, despite documenting them in reports. This negligence on their part could foster an extremely violent Ukrainian insurgency once the Donbas region is either annexed into Russia or completely extracted from Ukraine. Such an insurgency on the part of Ukraine would be no different than those orchestrated by jihadists in Iraq and Gaza. When this becomes the case in regards to Ukraine, the question is, will human rights organizations continue to downplay the civilian toll of Ukrainian efforts to reclaim lost territory despite civilian casualties, but at the same time warn insurgents in Iraq and Gaza about how their actions to reclaim lost territory is endangering the civilian population? This dilemma is why the international community needs to approach the crisis in Ukraine from the vantage point of addressing a global order that cultivates a discombobulated worldview that refuses to adequately keep track of which parties are or aren't in violation of international human rights laws.

All parties in a conflict are subject to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocol, as well as international humanitarian law. Such regulations are applicable to the war in Ukraine, and both sides have to follow the rules that are aimed to protect the civilian population. The rules also require both sides to take every measurable step to conduct their military operations in a way that ensures the safety of the civilian population and ability of non-combatants to escape the fighting. In addition, all sides must distinguish between combatant and non-combatant, and only launch attacks against combatants, which is anyone who has decided to take part in hostilities against an occupying force. Anyone who is not a member of the armed forces, but takes part in facilitating attacks against an occupying force is a combatant and is subject to the Geneva Convention and other protocols and international humanitarian laws meant for protecting the civilian population. Whenever there is doubt, the person in question is suppose to be presumed civilian.

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have to remain aware that insurgencies all over the world are carefully watching the situation in Ukraine unfold and are ready to use human rights evaluations of that conflict as a way to show that their goals are no different than that of the Ukrainians—a goal to essentially reclaim lost territory against forces that operate or have operated in a very similar

manner to the Russian forces in Ukraine.

Another entity in question is the International Criminal Court (ICC) which has also brought into question its own credibility, seeing that Russia has already been emboldened by ICC reluctance to investigate US war crimes in middle east, a move which can be construed as setting a precedent that justifies preemptive action and invading a nation on the basis of a presumed danger. Not only has Russia taken advantage of this precedent, but other nations can try to follow suit. India can strike Pakistan without warning. Israel can strike Iran. North Korea can strike South Korea. China can strike Taiwan. Turkey could invade Greece. While the US attests that they do not need a separate entity like the ICC to investigate US atrocities in the middle east by pointing to the fact that the US has prosecuted US soldiers who have committed war crimes, the fact that many in those cases were later acquitted or had the charges dropped could lead to Russia doing the same—launching an investigation just to get the ICC off its back, but then later dropping the charges while boasting of having taken the initiative to carry out their own investigation and prosecution. In this manner, US impunity and non-accountability serves as justification for Russia to shun western condemnation of their military operations. And no one in the international community should be surprised, since Human Rights Watch in fact warned about this issue of other nations becoming emboldened by the lack of accountability regarding US impunity in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria.

The ICC was initially welcomed as the answer to impunity, and since its inception, 123 nations have joined the court. But to this day, many war crimes committed throughout the world have been left uninvestigated and un-prosecuted. Much of the ICC's inquiry into alleged war crimes has been largely symbolic because in many cases the perpetrators are backed by a very robust military force. Most cases in which perpetrators of war crimes—who are high ranking officials—are brought to justice, are usually carried out when regime change or government overthrow has taken place. This was the case with Slobodan Milosevic, former president of Yugoslavia, who was indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in 1999(he died during the trial). However, a criminal court recommending regime change could put officials working for the court in very hot water. Moreover, the ICC was created to serve as a mechanism that would step in when nations accused of war crimes would refuse to conduct their own investigation. But as we see was the case with the US, the way for nations to evade this mechanism is by simply obliging to investigate and then later dismiss all charges. It thus becomes a win-win—the ICC is off one's back and the country absolves itself of responsibility. However, this places society under a very dangerous paradigm of justification and can only lead to a cascade of bold military action all over the world. While the reasons

for instituting the ICC was backed by legitimate concerns about impunity, since 2002, many feel that the court needs to do better than it has been doing when it comes to holding human rights offenders accountable. But this is unfair due to the fact that the court is only able to demand things that it cannot take by force. There is no enforcement mechanism by which the ICC can use force to enact justice, which is why its very existence is at times effectuating the opposite of its original intention to deter impunity. At the moment, one can argue that the court's refusal and negligence regarding certain perpetrators is very much compelling other nations to balance the scales when they feel the ICC has refused to do so. Much of the ICC's purposes has been carried out against African leaders like the former Congolese rebel leader Bosco Ntaganda, whom they convicted of war crimes and sentenced to 30 years in prison for murder, slavery, and drafting children into the military. The ICC is also investigating the forced deportation of the Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar to India, during which time 24,000 Rohingya Muslims were killed by Myanmar military and Buddhist militia. But as long as nations refuse to recognize the jurisdiction of the ICC, any arrest warrants that the ICC issues against suspected war criminals will ultimately end up being ignored. They currently have 15 arrest warrants issued, but many nations unwilling to help the ICC enforce it, which is why the former president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, charged with war crimes, can continue to evade arrest. There is a catch-22 to nations becoming a member of the ICC—they open themselves up to investigation for war crimes. Sooner or later, however, ICC arrest warrants may start being construed as calling for regime change if they are issued for sitting presidents.

The greatest example of impunity has been carried out by NATO forces, both in Libya in 2011 and in Yugoslavia in 1999. The lack of accountability in both conflicts is a major reason why ICC allegations into war crimes in Ukraine will not be taken seriously. NATO has not conducted their own investigations into war crimes committed by their forces, nor has the ICC formally charged the military bloc with any violations despite evidence presented by human rights groups that civilians were killed as a result of NATO strikes. In Libya, in March of 2011, member nations of NATO such as the US, UK, and France conducted an air and ground assault on Mu'ammar al-Gaddafi's forces. The operation was subject to UN Security Council regulation that all sides of the conflict are to do everything possible to prevent civilian casualties. NATO subsequently implemented a no-fly zone over Libya and carried out missions against Libyan military targets over a period of seven months. However, throughout the conflict, civilian areas in Libya were hit by strikes conducted by NATO forces. To this day, NATO has not responded to allegations (other than providing the typical excuse that they never targeted civilians)

nor conducted any formal investigation. In 2012, Amnesty International reported that 55 civilians were killed as a result of NATO air strikes in the cities of Tripoli, Zlitan, Majer Sirte, Brega, Surman, and Bani Walid. In addition, one resident told them that a NATO airstrike on September 15th 2011 killed 40 civilians. In many of the other cases of civilian casualties, there was no evidence of military forces or equipment deployed to the site of the airstrike, which implied that the area posed no threat and therefore should not have been attacked. Many of the families interviewed reported seeing no Libyan military maneuvers in the area that would justify their home being struck by rockets. In one attack in Majer, 34 civilians were killed and NATO provided nothing to justify it. In other cases, the victims could not understand why their house was targeted since no one in the house was part of the military or taking part in hostilities. According to ICC policy, since NATO did not take up an investigation over possible war crimes they committed in Libya, then the ICC could step in and launch an investigation. NATO, back in 1999, conducted a number airstrikes in Yugoslavia as part of a military campaign in the Kosovo War. The justification was in response to Yugoslavia's cleansing of ethnic Albanians. The aerial assault carried out by NATO forces lasted close to three months. While Yugoslavia killed over 2000 combatants, as well as nearly 9000 civilians, NATO strikes killed over 500 civilians. Subsequently, Human Rights Watch found no evidence of war crimes and recommended that NATO establish a separate commission to investigate violations of humanitarian law. Human Rights Watch also pointed out the possibility of Yugoslavia using civilians as human shields.

Chapter 3: Russia's War Crimes

Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a detailed report about what transpired in Bucha during the Russian occupation between March 4th 2022 and March 31st, 2022. However, it was largely onesided and managed to ignore, despite documentation, that Ukrainian soldiers were hiding weapons in residential homes, a tactic that Hamas uses in Gaza. Still and all, the details recorded by HRW workers who were present in Bucha between April 4th and April 10th made it clear that a plethora of crimes were carried out by Russian troops. These included executing Ukrainian civilians at point blank range, torture, beheadings, and rape, all of which are deemed war crimes according to the Geneva Convention. One of the HRW workers described the situation in Bucha being akin to a crime scene at pretty much every corner. Death permeated throughout the town, and those who inflicted it had no qualms about it, as they effectuated an atrocity that would deeply impact all of humanity. HRW corresponded with 32 residents in Bucha, of whom included the victimized and those watching the terror unfold. Others who provided information to HRW were first responders, coroner teams, physicians, nurses, and municipal workers. HRW also examined all the gathered evidence such as videos and photos taken by the residents in Bucha. However, their investigation could only examine what would constitute only a fragment of the terror carried out by the Russians. The investigation also does not factor in what could have led to the disproportionate aggressive actions on the part of the Russian troops in response to civilians who many have taken part in hostilities. The Ukrainian government advised civilians to take up arms and resist the occupiers, a recommendation that some segments of the media like the Washington Post was concerned about, due to the fact that taking an active part in hostilities automatically gives a person “combatant” status according to the Geneva Convention. Not to mention, it also raises the likelihood of escalation should any civilian-combatant actions trigger a disproportionate response from the occupying forces. This is what happened during the Haditha massacre in Iraq when after taking gunfire from the surrounding areas, US troops marched into residential areas and executed a number of civilians in a war crime of which all the perpetrators would never be punished for.

On April 15, 2022, it was reported that 278 bodies were recovered following the Russian retreat from the area, and many of the 278 bodies were that of non-combatants. Ruslan Kravchenko verified this with HRW. He serves as the chief regional prosecutor in Bucha. Moreover, more bodies were expected to be found—keep in mind that Bucha has a population of 36,000. A funeral home worker confirmed that his team of morticians had no choice but to bury over a dozen

bodies near the Church of St. Andrew and All Saints due to the fact that there was no longer anymore room at the morgue to accommodate the growing number of victims in Bucha. Most of those buried near the church were non-combatant civilians. Another person that worked at a funeral home stated that he found and gathered 200 dead bodies in Bucha since the commencement of the invasion on February 24th 2022. These deceased included men, women, and children, but mostly men. The cause of death for nearly all of them was from gunfire, and roughly 50 of the victims showed signs of bondage and torture. Those whose hands were tied, according to the worker, were most likely taken captive and executed. Russian forces were searching specifically for people who participated in the Donbas conflict and who had tattoos symbolizing far right or neo-nazi movements.

During the time HRW was present in Bucha, they recorded 16 confirmed cases of war crimes of which included extrajudicial executions and the deliberate murder of civilians, mostly men. There were a number of people in Bucha that were wounded by gunfire and had suffered wounds in the neck and shoulders. A nine year old girl was shot in the shoulder trying to flee Russian soldiers.

HRW was given information about an execution that occurred in Bucha on March 4th, when the Russians were present. This information was provided by someone who was able to escape Bucha. He relayed that the Russians had taken five men captive and executed one of them by shooting him execution style. HRW was also told about what transpired the next day when a 48 year old man named Viktor Koval was killed as Russian troops raided his home. Meanwhile, the Russian government fiercely denied any reports that Russian troops were killing civilians during the “military operation.”, and continued to assert that not a single resident was injured or killed by Russian forces, and that any reports of the contrary was simply orchestrated by Ukrainian authorities. The Russian forces invaded Ukraine on February 24th, 2022, but didn’t enter Bucha until February 27th, according to the residents of Bucha. Shortly thereafter, the Russian forces were repelled by Ukrainian forces, but were able to gain control of the town on March 5th when they launched a counter offensive the day before. There is no information on where Ukrainian forces were deploying their troops in the beginning phases of the battle at Bucha. Bucha was used by the Russians as a strategic measure for leveraging their assault on Kyiv. During this occupation, Russian troops were ordered to go door to door, detain and execute anyone who helped Ukraine in the Donbas conflict or anyone who was affiliated with far right or Neo-nazi groups. They also searched for weapons. While Both HRW and Amnesty International documented that weapons were found in a civilian house, only Amnesty International confirmed that Ukrainian

soldiers hid the weapons in a residential home near Bucha. The Amnesty International report was also more forthright in conveying that Ukrainian forces were prohibited from doing this because it endangered civilians. The HRW report did not mention anything in regards to violations by Ukrainian soldiers nor ask or speculate on how the weapons ended up in the home of two civilians.

During their occupation of Bucha, Russian troops were telling residents that they were there to save them from nazis. The Russian troops also parked their tanks in front of homes in residential areas in order to deter Ukrainian artillery, and refused to tell family members of those detained where they were taking their loved ones. Both of these were serious violations of human rights. Many of the men taken captive were later found dead in various places around Bucha i.e, streets, parks, basements. Not telling family members of the detained where they were taking them constitutes “enforced disappearance” which is considered a war crime by international law. A few of the dead bodies discovered were mined. The Russian troops were using Ukrainian civilians as human shields and made it a point to situate themselves near civilian areas like homes and schools in order to deter Ukrainian artillery bombardments. There is video evidence that confirms this. When it comes to reports of middle east violence, the Russian approach in Bucha is contrary to how this mode of operation is applied in the middle east, specifically as it was the case during the US/NATO invasion of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya where the invaded country’s insurgents would hide behind the civilian population. In many cases, the only winning strategy that a smaller number of militants can apply against an incoming larger military force is to resort to surprise attacks and ambushes by hiding in places where they would least be expected. Unfortunately, the only way to achieve such is by hiding behind soft targets i.e. schools, hospitals, libraries, and then launching ambush attacks from those positions, which only compromises the safety of civilians in the area. Hamas uses this tactic in Gaza, ISIS/Anti-Assad rebels likely used this in Syria, the Pro-Russian separatists likely applied the tactic during the Donbas conflict. But in the case of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the invading force is the one primarily applying this strategy of using civilians as human shields. Citing those aforementioned examples, one may extrapolate that in the case of Bucha, Ukrainian forces would be the only ones setting their military equipment near residential homes. However, video footage from social media showed that in Bucha, it was also the Russian forces placing themselves in the midst of residential and civilian areas. But if we observe the war from the vantage point that the conflict began in 2014, both sides making use of the civilian population is of no surprise. Such was rampant during the Donbas conflict.

When Russian forces occupied other residential buildings, they

ordered the tenants to relocate to the basement area and leave the front door unlocked, at least according to one case documented by HRW. Residents described how when the Russian troops came upon a door that was locked, they would force their way in and ransack the home. Many of those living in Bucha at the time told HRW that Russian troops shot at people who ventured outside their homes, leaving it likely that residents were placed on a forced lock-down by Russian troops. This is common by military forces. Ukraine imposed a 3 day lock-down on Kyiv residents at the beginning of the war and ordered the military to shoot anyone they see walking the streets. US forces imposed a similar lockdown in Fallujah in 2004. Russia likely applied this in Bucha. Vasyl Yushenko was killed by Russian forces when he stepped out on his balcony for a smoke. One nurse revealed that many injuries occurred among Bucha residents, even among children as she was left having to tend to 10 injured residents, as well as a little girl who was wounded after being shot by Russian soldiers who were trying to stop her from escaping. The man the little girl was with was killed, while she had to have her arm removed. Residents were also injured in explosions and bombings that occurred near their residence. It was reported that Russian soldiers shelled the town at the beginning of their advance into Bucha “during artillery exchanges” with Ukrainian forces. There is no documentation on what areas Ukrainian soldiers in Bucha were using as a launching pad to fire artillery at Russian targets. It was noted that Russian troops looted various properties, confiscating highly valued items such as jewelry and electronics. Looting for personal use is considered illegal by international laws on warfare. Valuables can only be attained in warfare if some form of compensation is applied.

All entities in war are obligated to abide by international law, as well as the Geneva Convention of 1949 and other additional regulations such as the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions. Occupational forces are subject to laws of occupation and international human rights law. Random killing, looting, torture, abduction, vicious treatment of detainees are all illegal according to international laws and regulations on warfare and occupation. Violation of these by soldiers who act arbitrarily or by commanders who give such orders to do so constitutes war crimes. Any executive command entities that have knowledge of such acts and refuse to investigate them or punish those responsible are also liable to being charged with war crimes.

Those living in Bucha reported running low on basic necessities like food and water and electricity, and that some people died as a result of this. One person was reliant on an oxygen machine and when the electricity went out, the machine was no longer operable and the person died. Other crimes perpetrated by the Russian forces took place in Adriviika, Hostomel, and Motzyhn, and those working in

Bucha expect more casualties to be factored in when evidence is gathered in other areas. Ukrainian police reported 900 Ukrainian citizens dead in Kyiv as a result of the Russian invasion. However, there was no clear assessment on how those victims perished. The chief regional prosecutor, according to HRW, said that there was 600 dead in Bucha alone. These reports by the Ukrainian police and the chief regional prosecutor stood as of April 15, 2022.

The HRW recommended that Ukrainian officials place evidence gathering near the top of their to-do list because such could be imperative for future war crimes prosecution. They also advised that such would require restricting access to areas where mass graves had been dug out, at least until investigators could analyze the bodies and conclude how the victims died, as well as identify them. If the Russians left anything behind, such could also be used to further implicate Russia for war crimes. The HRW also urged other institutional bodies to assist in the investigation to ensure a thorough examination of evidence. If Ukraine decides to become a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) treaty, they could have their law aligned with the ICC's policies, which would make the war crimes prosecution process easier and more streamlined and help ensure that each victim and their families receive adequate justice. However, nations that recognize the jurisdiction of the court open themselves up to being investigated and prosecuted for war crimes by the ICC. The ICC has also recognized the conflict between Ukraine and Russia as an international war long before 2022, when both nations were being cited for war crimes during the Donbas conflict. Neither Russia nor the US recognizes the court. HRW in their report in Bucha took a different approach from the one they normally apply to their reports of war crimes committed by US troops. HRW normally does not recommend the ICC get involved in war crimes investigations against the US. They normally repeatedly urge US officials to carry out their own investigation. Conversely, in the Bucha report, HRW does not implore Russian authorities to carry out an investigation of actions carried by their own troops. They instead call for an ICC investigation into Russian war crimes. A clear western bias on the part of HRW explains why Russia shut down the HRW offices in Russia.

Those who were detained by Russian troops during their occupation of Bucha were taken away secretly and executed. There are 9 documented cases of this by the HRW. This has been extrapolated from eyewitness accounts and also by observing how some of the dead were tied up. A number of victims were located on the outskirts of Kyiv around Yablunska street. The number of summary executions could rise as more bodies which show indications of this manner of death continue to be found around Bucha. These type of executions are considered war crimes, regardless of whether or not the victim was a non-combatant, captive,

or POW.

A middle aged woman named Iryna described how Russian troops fired upon her home, which was located at the corner of Yablunska street and Vokzalna Streets. This occurred at the beginning of the Russian advance into Bucha on March 5th. The house ended up ablaze, catching fire as a result of the barrage of gunfire. After the residents in the home—the woman, her father, and husband—screamed repeatedly that they were civilians, the Russian soldiers shooting at the house subsequently ordered them to vacate the house and reveal where the nazis were hiding. The Russian soldiers told them, as well as many of the other residents in Bucha, that they were there to save the Bucha residents from nazis. Using documentation, the Russian soldiers had a list of names of people who participated in the Donbas conflict and accused many residents of Bucha of killing pro-Russians during the war in Donbas prior to February 24, 2022. According to Iryna as documented by the HRW, “The soldiers accused us of killing people in Donbas. They accused us of killing the Berkut in Maidan as well. They concluded that we were guilty and should be punished.” The Russian soldiers in reference to the Berkut are referring to members of the Berkut anti-riot police force who were killed by protesters during 2014 Maidan protests in Kyiv. After confronting the residents of Iryna’s home, the Russians ordered the men who lived there—Oleh who was Iryna’s husband and Volodymyr who was Iryna’s father—to put out the fire. As Iryna was being interrogated by a Russian soldier, Oleh and Volodymyr were taken to the yard. After being questioned, the Russian soldiers let Volodymyr go, but kept Oleh in their custody before shooting him in the head. His dead body was located outside the yard on the sidewalk, with half his face blown away by the gunshot wound as blood furiously flowed out of his wound onto the sidewalk. According to Iryna, “he was lying with his face down, and blood was pumping out of his left ear. The right side of his face was missing, and brain tissue and blood were coming out of his wound.” The soldiers, as Iryna observed, were treating the situation as if it were some form of entertainment. They then informed and threatened to kill Iryna and Volodymyr if they didn’t get away from the area. Oleh’s body would remain decomposing right there on the sidewalk for the rest of the month until Ukrainian forces and officials arrived and removed it.

On Sadova Street which runs analogous with Yablunska Street, Russian troops took Vasily Nedashkivski and his wife captive on March 17th after finding weapons in their home. Amnesty International’s report documented a case near Bucha of which Ukrainian soldiers had taken weapons they took from a Russian armored vehicle and hid them in a residential home. Meanwhile, the two living at the house were taken to another building to be interrogated. Vasily’s wife was subsequently released, while Vasily

was taken to a place that the Russian forces called “headquarters” and was found dead weeks after. In retrospect, if Ukrainian soldiers did in fact use Vasily’s home to hide weapons, it ultimately endangered the residents that lived there and led to Vasily being shot by Russian forces. The Russians never told Vasily’s wife, whose name is Tanya, where he was taken. This enforced disappearance aspect applied here constitutes war crimes. Tanya and her neighbor did mention that residents were allowed to leave their homes, but only for water on certain occasions. When the Ukrainian officials found Vasily’s body, they also saw the dead body of another man, Igor Lytvynenko. HRW looked into the situation and the staircase that was filled with blood, they saw that Vasily was beaten very badly with cuts on his hands and bruising on his lower stomach. It looked as though he had been nearly bludgeoned to death with repeated blows to the head before being executed. He was later buried in a makeshift grave near his home.

On March 20th, Russian troops shot and killed a man wearing a black track suit. This was overheard by two people living next to the building that the Russian troops who committed the killing were occupying. Prior to the killing, the Russian soldiers told the two to go back inside their apartment and remain there. However, shortly thereafter, they hear commotion between Russian troops and another man before gunfire erupted. The Russians shot and killed the man in a black track suit who yelled “Slava Ukraini” before he was executed. Recovering the body at the time was out of the question since Russian troops occupied and often cooked food in the courtyard where the man’s dead body lay. Both the men who overheard the killing had to wait 48 hours before they could recover the body for burial in a makeshift grave. Ukrainian authorities would later retrieve the body from the grave. In social media photos that appeared to show the man as he lay dead in the yard, it showed that his hands were tied with duct tape, but there was no way to confirm if they were tied before he was killed by Russian troops or after.

The basement of a dormitory at the summer camp where Russian troops were conducting torture sessions was located on Vokzalna St. On April 4th, HRW observed five dead bodies there, all of whom were men wearing civilian clothing and whom had been apparently shot. Four of the five had their hands tied behind their backs, while the other sustained gunshot wounds in the chest. Their names were Serhiy Mateshko, Dmytro Shulmeister, Volodymyr Boychenko, Valery Prudko, and Viktor Prudko. The Russians used the camp as a headquarter and spraypainted “V” outside the camp walls. There were designated areas for eating, and not far from the basement was an area dug out for parking armored vehicles. Two other vehicles in the area also had “V” spray-painted on them. “V” was a symbol of support for Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Satellite images showed that armored vehicles were in Bucha near the camp site on February 28th,

while the other aforementioned regular vehicles spray-painted with “V” were seen near the site on satellite imagery on March 10th .

In a video recorded by Denys Davydov along Yablunska street on April 1st showed seven dead victims, one of whom had his hands tied behind his back. This video footage was corroborated by another video posted on Facebook on April 2nd that showed those same seven bodies in the exact same spot. This April 2nd video was filmed from a car that drove alongside two other cars, one of which was occupied by three Ukrainian troops. It was presumed that the man who was deceased with his hands tied behind his back was the victim of an execution carried out by the Russian forces. Meanwhile, a funeral home director named Serhii Kaplychnyi reported finding a number of bodies that appeared to have died via execution. These bodies were discovered at various locations in Bucha, such as on Yablubka Street, where he reported seeing eight dead bodies, all of whom suffered gunshot wounds, with six of them having their hands bound together. At the same site but inside the building on Yablunska Street 144, Serhii said he encountered another dead body on the steps going up to the second floor. At first glance, there weren't any visible wounds, but upon further investigation, Serhii discovered a bullet wound in the dead man's heart. A short while later, 20 more bodies were located on Yablunska Street, and 10 of them had their hands tied together, indicating summary executions took place. Serhii noted that the vast majority of victims were killed at near point blank range, some shot in the head. One of the other morticians, Serhii Matiuk said that the number of bodies he gathered from the streets was in the range of 200, and this was from February 28th when the Russians first advanced into Bucha. This funeral home worker said that all of those victims were killed at close range via gunshot to the head or eyes. These victims included men and women, with some dead in the streets, and others in vehicles. However, he reported that he didn't start seeing bodies with their hands tied until a few days after the Russians entered Bucha. But during the time that the Russian were occupying the town, he recorded having seen nearly 50 bodies with their hands bound, indicating that the victims were summarily executed. They also had bruises and gun shots in the legs and hands, which indicated torture.

When it comes to victims that were killed by simply being in the area—seven instances of which were documented by HRW, it is possible that the Russians could have opened fire on them not knowing if they were enemy combatants. Civilians were encouraged by Ukrainian officials to take part in hostilities. However, according to international law, occupying forces are obligated to take every measure to confirm the status of the target—whether or not they are an enemy combatant or civilian and whether or not they pose an imminent threat. Case and point. On March 5th, on Yablunska Street

at the northeast part, two men who were taking refuge in their basement amid artillery bombardments and gunshots decided to have a look outside once the shelling stopped. This was around 4:30pm. They briefly stepped outside to examine the destruction. One of the men who was the son in law of the other man was shot as he was going back inside. He died the next morning as his family repeatedly tried to contact an ambulance or Ukrainian defense forces. The family buried him in a makeshift shallow grave before the local officials would retrieve the body after the Russians left Bucha. Another example of indiscriminate gunfire upon civilians occurred on March 7th. Nikolaii reported to HRW that Russian troops opened fire on him and some of his family members that day while they were outside but inside of their enclosed balcony on the sixth floor of the apartment building they lived at. Nikolaii, his sister and her husband, Vasyl Yushenko were on the balcony where gunfire struck Vasyl in the throat as he was about to light his cigarette. Luckily, he survived. They took him inside and a neighbor was able to apply first aid, saving Vasyl's life. Even as the neighbor was working on Vasyl, another shot was fired into the apartment by the Russian forces. Vasyl ultimately survived as he was evacuated and wheelbarrowed by Nikolaii, his wife and the neighbors to a Kyiv hospital where he recovered and was later discharged. HRW confirmed this report when they visited the apartment on April 6th and saw the bullet impacts on the glass around the balcony, and along the wall and cabinets behind the glass. There were also blood stains on the ground, as well as human tissue. The trajectory and location of the bullet impact from both shots fired at the apartment showed that the Russian forces purposely aimed at the residents.

In another instance of indiscriminate fire, the Russian troops shot and killed Artem, a 37 year old man who went to his garage to retrieve some food items. Just prior, he was sheltering in the basement in an apartment where he and others took refuge, but went to the garage to get food before he was shot. One of the neighbors who lived nearby reported seeing Russian troops near the garage where Artem was sheltering. She then witnessed them open the door there and then open fire before immediately closing the door. His body was later found on March 20th. He was laying dead on his back with a glass jar of dipping sauce cracked open and spilled all over his legs. He was buried nearby in a shallow grave. He had been employed by the Ukrainian military to paint vehicles and during the Russian invasion took refuge in the basement and often supplied food from his own stockpiles to others sheltering with him. This act committed by Russian forces is strikingly similar to how US military killed civilians during the Haditha massacre. Much like the Russians in this case of going to a residence and shooting inside the house without looking to see who was there, US forces in Haditha carried the same

manner of operation, shooting into the home without looking to see who was inside. And in Haditha, many inside those homes were women and children, and those US military personnel that killed them, all had their murder charges later dropped. In the case of Bucha, none of the human rights organizations asked if Ukrainian civilians were shooting at Russian troops from their homes. A very important factor considering that civilians were encouraged to take up arms against the Russian forces. When US soldiers carried out their massacre in Haditha, they had first encountered gunfire and suspected that it came from a nearby residential area, prompting them to engage the houses and kill everyone inside. Official US military protocol authorizes US soldiers to destroy any structure, whether civilian or non-civilian, as well those within it if they deem the structure to be a hostile threat. This goes for soldiers on the ground and in the air. Once a structure is perceived to contain enemy combatant activity, US soldiers are within their right, according to military regulation, to decimate the structure and those inside. This is likely similar with most military regulations, including that of Russia's.

On March 12th, a 61 year old man was killed on Yablunska Street. It happened near an apartment building. The victim, Iliia Navalnyi, had just left his friend's house. The friend said that while he did not see firsthand the killing of Iliis, he did see Russian troops outside the apartment complex shooting "across the yard" The next morning, Iliia was found dead 15 meters from the apartment with papers scattered everywhere near his body. The papers were documents related to Iliia's national ID.

An old man on his walker was shot and killed near a Soviet memorial on the corner of Nove Highway and Vokzalna Streets, according to eyewitnesses Mykola and Serhii B. They relayed to HRW that they encountered the body on March 8th, as it was leaning over dead near the walker with gunshot wounds. HRW investigated the report and went to the area and saw significant damage to the surrounding structures, which indicated that the area was one of high combat activity. There was no way to tell who killed the old man, whether it was directly by Russian troops or by crossfire between Russian troops and Ukrainian resistance.

Just a few days before the discovery of the old man, Russian troops open fired on a man and a young girl. The man Volodymyr Rubalio was killed, but the young girl who was shot in the arm was able to escape and find neighbors who took her to a basement to provide medical treatment. However, the girl's condition worsened and the tissues around her shoulder where she was wounded continued to deteriorate, which led to her arm being amputated after she was finally admitted into a hospital. HRW never documented the girl's name nor was able to confirm the event. However, when they

visited the spot where the girl was shot, they did observe blood stains on the ground separated from each other by a few feet, which indicated that two people may have been wounded there. Another man named Oleh who was 33 years old was missing since March 19th and was later found dead under a pile of metal just a few feet from his apartment building. When HRW went to view the area, they noticed blood stains just meters away from the building where a Russian commander was based. The building, following the Russian withdrawal from Bucha, was littered with rations and Russian uniforms. Ultimately, there was no way to determine the circumstances surrounding Oleh's death—whether he was killed there or placed there after having been wounded elsewhere. HRW asserts that because the area was occupied heavily with Russian military personnel, the Russians were aware of Oleh and the circumstances surrounding his death. The wife, however, was not notified about his death; she only found out about it after the Russian withdrawal —this, according to a resident of Bucha who mentioned it to HRW.

Iryna, whose husband was killed back on March 5th, told HRW that after the Russian troops ordered her to leave the yard where they executed her husband, she noticed a woman laying dead near a bicycle just a few feet from the gate. The woman is presumed to be the same woman seen on aerial footage being shot by Russian forces just after she disembarks from her bicycle after turning on Yablunska Street, where numerous Russian military vehicles were stationed. The footage, which was posted on Telegram on April 5th, indicated that the killing took place between late February and March 9th. HRW interviewed both the head person in Ukraine's de-mining unit in Bucha and the head person of the anti-tank brigade also working on de-mining in Bucha. They both reported that a number of dead bodies in Bucha had been booby trapped. The head of the Ukrainian de-mining unit, Lt. Col. Roman Shutylo, discovered on April 8th, two dead bodies that had been booby trapped. Altogether, 20 dead bodies were found to have booby traps and mines on them. Many of these booby traps and mines were devised with hand grenades and anti-personnel mines. The de-miners later shared videos and photos with HRW showing how the traps were constructed and designed to detonate. Anti personnel mines and booby traps are banned under the 1997 International Mine Ban Treaty, but Russia never signed onto the treaty.

HRW gathered evidence that the Russian forces looted a number of homes during the occupation, taking all sort of valuables like appliances and jewelry. One person in Bucha told HRW that Russian soldiers invaded his neighbor's house after they evacuated Bucha and damaged a number of things there. He also saw many of the goods from the house stockpiled on Russian military vehicles as they departed the area on March 31st. Another person named Tarasevych

who lived in Bucha during the Russian occupation, shared photo evidence that Russian troops were taking household items and valuables. The photos revealed Russian military vehicles with a number of items piled onto the roof, items he recognized as belonging to the tenants who had lived in the apartment building that the Russians inhabited. Tarasevych also told HRW that he witnessed Russian soldiers taking goods from an apartment complex and walking out with them. The items were loaded in bags and taken away by Russian soldiers as they left the apartment building on March 31st . According to HRW, there may be the existence of radio intercepts which show that the Russian soldiers discussed acquiring luxury items taken from civilian homes in Bucha and bringing them back to Russia. However, HRW cannot confirm that to be the case with certainty.

HRW verified that the Russian troops used civilian areas as shields against Ukrainian forces and also placed civilians in Bucha on a mandatory lock-down, prohibiting them from leaving their homes. HRW did not inquire about the location of Ukrainian forces at the time—whether or not they were attacking Russian targets from residential areas. But from the report, it was clear that Russian troops parked their military vehicles in front of residential homes, and deployed their forces in residential areas, similar to how the Russia-backed separatists did so during the Donbas war. Therefore, its conclusive that Russian military personnel did not apply every measure possible to avoid the endangerment of civilian areas. It was confirmed on satellite imagery that Russian troops parked two military vehicles right near an apartment complex north of Yablunska Street, with skid marks in areas nearby showing that Russian military vehicles circulated the area regularly. This evidence lines up with that revealed by the photos and videos taken by Tarasevych, which showed Russian forces and artillery situated in civilian areas, including a base for launching mortars which was situated near civilian residences on Sadova Street. Another area occupied by Russian troops and artillery equipment was near schools. HRW documented evidence that Russian troops were using the school as a place to mount artillery and fire upon Ukrainian positions. According to the Safe Schools Declaration, an agreement among 113 countries of which Russian is absent, schools are not to be used for combat or military operations. From April 4th to the 10th , HRW was granted access to see the bodies that were exhumed from a shallow grave near the Church of St. Andrew and All Saints. Five of the dead from that grave appeared to have been killed via execution by Russian soldiers in the basement at the summer camp on Vokzalna Street. All the bodies removed from the mass grave were lined up in a courtyard and wrapped in body-bags that were left open. HRW was able to watch the exhumations on April 8 th and 10th. They noted that officials

conducting the task were clothed in protective gear and documented via photo and video the bodies taken from the gravesite, as well as all aspects regarding what was on the body. For at least seven days after the Russians left, Bucha remained full of dead bodies, some buried, others laying in the street. Evidence such as blood stains and bullet casing were ubiquitous. All of this evidence would be vital for war crimes litigation against Russia, but the key is gathering the evidence in a timely manner as to not evoke suspicion of tampering or neglect which could lead to evidence being lost, damaged or destroyed. According to HRW, having an efficient storage system and corroboration among multiple international entities is another key that can make a solid case against Russia in regards to war crimes committed in Bucha. As of April, a number of entities have launched probes looking to see if Russia is guilty of war crimes in Bucha and other areas of Ukraine. Many of these investigations will be fused with a confirmation bias that will prevent a thorough assessment. Those entities that intend to investigate include the Ukrainian government, the International Criminal Court (ICC), Germany, and the UN. HRW urges Ukraine to become a member of the ICC so that the Court can have more pedigree as far as conducting a more robust investigation into what occurred in Bucha, as well developing a “legal framework” outlining how domestic investigation will apply to prosecution at the international level. Ukraine has since 2013 permitted the ICC to assert jurisdiction over war crimes occurring in Ukraine, but Ukraine has yet to officially become a member of the ICC.

In retrospect, HRW had been present in Bucha from April 4th to April 10th, 2022, after the Russians left the town. During this time, the HRW was able to conduct interviews with a number of residents and see the sites where dead bodies were scattered along the street and also those bodies left in the basement of a building located at a children’s summer camp. On numerous occasions, HRW was able to travel along Yablunska Street without escort. They observed evidence in the form of photo, video, and satellite imagery, all provided by local officials, residents, and victims of Russian aggression who survived. The interviews were done with a translator on hand. Some of those interviewed chose not to reveal their identity, while others did. The HRW inquiry into what was happening in Bucha started back in early March when the Russians occupied the area, and during such time, HRW conducted most of their correspondence online or in-person with people who managed to get out of Bucha after witnessing what occurred. Throughout their investigation, they seemed to draw conclusions that were motivated both by confirmation bias, as well as evidence gathering. They also applied a methodology in analyzing their findings, that differed from the ones they typically apply after reporting on US war crimes. During their report on Bucha, they made

no appeal to Russian authorities to look into allegations of war crimes carried out by their soldiers. They immediately recommended an ICC investigation which is something they normally do not do when it comes to US war crimes. Keep in mind that HRW is a US-based human rights organization.

A number of EU countries have expelled Russian diplomats from their countries, and so did Japan. Both China and India's representatives on the United Nations Security Council referred to the atrocities in Bucha carried out by Russian forces as deeply disturbing. China, however, as a nation that has been conciliatory towards Russia throughout the conflict, resisted pointing the finger directly at Russia. They even broadcast Russia's statements disputing the claims made by Ukraine on what transpired in Bucha. Belarus's president went a step further and denied the claims altogether and accused British operatives in Ukraine of conducting a false flag attack in Bucha to make it seem like the Russians were responsible just so Britain could levy more sanctions on Russia. He also claimed to have evidence in the form of documentation confirming this to be the case, and that he has already presented the documents to the Kremlin. The US, as well as Britain, called for Russia to be indicted on charges of committing war crimes. They also expressed that more sanctions should be applied to the Russian state, while more weapons be sent to Ukraine. But many believe that the supply of weapons into Ukraine will only prolong the war and cause more civilian casualties, a prospect that is even more likely due to the fact that the west will not supply Ukraine with the weapons that would at least allow Ukraine to end the war on their own terms. France, meanwhile, has also accused Russia of violating the laws of war and agreed that sanctions were justified and should be applied towards Russian energy industries of coal and oil. Following French President Macron's statement, the EU placed a ban prohibiting the EU from importing Russian coal, wood, fertilizer, cement, and rubber. This turned out to be a huge expense for Russia that would amount to 8 billion euros annually.

Following reports of what occurred in Bucha, the Russians denied that they ordered the killing of civilians. The Foreign Minister of Russia agreed with the assessment of the Belarusian president that it was a hoax or false flag attack that was staged. According to the Russian Foreign Minister, because reports of dead civilians were not presented until four days after the Russians left, the Ukrainian soldiers must have staged it all. However, the Associated Press confirmed that the mayor of Bucha was reporting dead civilians there back in early March. In another instance where it was confirmed by satellite imagery that Ukrainian civilians were being killed during the time the Russians occupied the town, the Russian representative to the UN insisted that the bodies shown after the Russians left Bucha were not there during the time of their occupation. The Russian

Defense Ministry went on to state on Telegram that Russian troops were not targeting civilians during their operation in Bucha, which is the common answer used by most nations accused of war crimes. Ukraine during the Donbas War, the United States, Israel and even Hamas has used that defense. Moreover, the Russian Defense Ministry stated that those killed in Bucha were killed by Ukrainian airstrikes and that the bodies shown in the videos could be seen moving. The BBC later ruled out that the videos were choreographed. One of the most highly regarded sources of the BBC, a media firm called Bellingcat, pointed out how Russian media and a member of Bucha's city council Taras Shapravsky stated that the Russians left Bucha on April 1st at the latest. In Russia, it was clear that there were attempts to paint the Bucha narrative as staged. In one instance, a video was aired on Russian state TV and purported to show that Ukrainians were using mannequins to set up the Bucha hoax. However, this was debunked when it was confirmed that the video was the filming taking place on a television set in Saint Petersburg, Russia. This was confirmed by those who were on set at that time. Another video showed Ukrainian soldiers using cables to pull dead bodies, and was purported in that case to be their staging of the Bucha massacre. But Associated Press stated that cables were used as a precaution due to the fact that some of the bodies in Bucha had been booby trapped. This was confirmed by investigators.

In the online community, the expressing of hatred for east Slavic people was condoned on a number of media platforms. On the pro-Russian side, there were numerous comments on the media app Telegram by Russian nationalists condoning the massacre in Bucha and calling for more attacks on Ukrainians. Some went as far as advocating the extermination of the race altogether. All of this was according to an analysis of pro-Russian channels on the Telegram app. The study noted a strong religious element to much of the hate being expressed. There was homophobia and one of the Russian activists-journalist from Odessa, the city where 48 pro-Russian activists were trapped and burned alive at the Trade Union Building in 2014, referred to Ukrainians trapped in Mariupol as cockroaches and who should be murdered. On the other side, Facebook and Instagram, American social networking services, had begun allowing users in some countries to post messages calling for the murder of Russian nationals and the Russian president. This was according to internal emails that were leaked, which showed that Meta, formerly Facebook, was going to alter its hate speech rules for the Ukraine/Russia war to allow users in countries in close proximity to the war to call for the death of both the Russian president and Belarusian president. This was a u-turn on Facebook's policy regarding incitement of violence. As long as the post was in regards to the invasion of Ukraine, users on Facebook were allowed to call for

the death of Russian people and Russian soldiers.

The Human Rights Watch organization is considered by many entities throughout the world as notoriously biased in how they approach investigating human rights issues. In 2014, an open letter was published excoriating HRW for what many international organizations and scholars all over the world felt was their unfair bias towards the United States and United States foreign policy. The letter was signed by over 100 academics, scholars, as well as some UN officials such as Hans von Sponeck and Richard Falk. Hans von Sponeck was the former Assistant Secretary General of the UN, while Richard Falk was the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories. The letter outlined how members of HRW were former members of US foreign policy agencies. For example, Tom Malinowski was once special adviser to Bill Clinton and later became Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to HRW. Myles Frechette was a former US ambassador to Colombia and eventually became a member of HRW's Americas advisory committee. This was also the case for Michael Shifter, who served as the director for the US government-funded National Endowment for Democracy's Latin America division. However, it must be said that HRW was well aware of how US foreign policy during their war on terror would set a precedent in which other nations will feel justified to act with the same impunity concerning their foreign policy goals. Here is what HRW stated in a 2011 report entitled "Getting Away with Torture: The Bush Administration and Mistreatment of Detainees." It concerns US violations of human rights and the residual effects of such:

The Price of Impunity: The US government's disregard for human rights in fighting terrorism in the years following the September 11, 2001 attacks diminished the US' moral standing, set a negative example for other governments, and undermined US government efforts to reduce anti-American militancy around the world.

In particular, the CIA's use of torture, enforced disappearance, and secret prisons was illegal, immoral, and counterproductive. These practices tainted the US government's reputation and standing in combating terrorism, negatively affected foreign intelligence cooperation, and sparked anger and resentment among Muslim communities, whose assistance is crucial to uncovering and preventing future global terrorist threats.

President Barack Obama took important steps toward setting a new course when he abolished secret CIA prisons and banned the use of torture upon taking office in January 2009. But other measures have yet to be taken, such as ending the practice of indefinite

detention without trial, closing the military detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and ending rendition of detainees to countries that practice torture. Most crucially, the US commitment to human rights in combating terrorism will remain suspect unless and until the current administration confronts the past. Only by fully and forthrightly dealing with those responsible for systematic violations of human rights after September 11 will the US government be seen to have surmounted them.

Without real accountability for these crimes, those who commit abuses in the name of counterterrorism will point to the US mistreatment of detainees to deflect criticism of their own conduct. Indeed, when a government as dominant and influential as that of the United States openly defies laws prohibiting torture, a bedrock principle of human rights, it virtually invites others to do the same. The US government's much-needed credibility as a proponent of human rights was damaged by the torture revelations and continues to be damaged by the complete impunity for the policymakers implicated in criminal offenses.

As in countries that have previously come to grips with torture and other serious crimes by national leaders, there are countervailing political pressures within the United States. Commentators assert that any effort to address past abuses would be politically divisive, and might hinder the Obama administration's ability to achieve pressing policy objectives.

This position ignores the high cost of inaction. Any failure to carry out an investigation into torture will be understood globally as purposeful toleration of illegal activity, and as a way to leave the door open to future abuses.[4] The US cannot convincingly claim to have rejected these egregious human rights violations until they are treated as crimes rather than as "policy options."

In contrast, the benefits of conducting a credible and impartial criminal investigation are numerous. For example, the US government would send the clearest possible signal that it is committed to repudiating the use of torture. Accountability would boost US moral authority on human rights in counterterrorism in a more concrete and persuasive way than any initiative to date; set a compelling example for governments that the US has criticized for committing human rights abuses and for the populations that suffer from such abuses; and might reveal legal and institutional failings that led to the use of torture, pointing to ways to improve the government's effectiveness in fighting terrorism. It would also sharply reduce the likelihood of foreign investigations and

prosecutions of US officials—which have already begun in Spain—based on the principle of universal jurisdiction, since those prosecutions are generally predicated on the responsible government's failure to act.

With this aspect taken into account, Russia can simply refuse to cooperate with international agencies regarding war crimes in Ukraine and can base this on the fact that since the US is not being held accountable for human rights violations by international agencies or US agencies for that matter, those same international agencies can in no way bring charges upon Russia until they first bring formal charges against the United States. Refusing to do so justifies the consideration that human rights violations are permitted within the international framework. Now in light of that, Russia's policy on Ukraine follows the same justification that the US applied in the middle east. First was the fear that Ukraine would acquire weapons of mass destruction from NATO which is no different than the United States' fear that Saddam Hussein would have acquired from Africa the materials needed to produce weapons of mass destruction. Second justification for Russia's invasion of Ukraine was that Ukraine was actively committing genocide in the Donbas region, killing Russian-speakers, as well as refusing to allow water to flow into Crimea, thereby justifying Russia's decision to invade the country on the grounds of humanitarian aims. United States tried to argue similar for justifying their invasion of Iraq in 2003. So now there is an international legal precedent which tolerates human rights abuses. It becomes the case that immunity from such activities corresponds with a nation's military might—the more military capability, the more immunity essentially. Russia can also rationalize recognizing as autonomous the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic due to the Ukrainian government forces shelling civilian areas in their attempt to crack down on the separatists during the Donbas War. This is a similar model applied by the US against Libya and Syria. In Libya in 2011 during the Arab Spring, the US actually went a step further than Russia did on Ukraine. After Gaddafi, president of Libya at the time, attempted to crackdown on violent separatists in his country while killing civilians in the process, the United States recognized the separatists in Libya as the official ruling authority of the country. The United States did this in Syria as well, recognizing the rebels in Syria as the official ruling authority of the country after Assad attempted to put down separatist elements in his country while killing civilians in the process. Russia, on the other hand, only recognizes the separatists in Ukraine as the official ruling authority within their respective region. Much like the US/NATO intervened in the civil wars occurring in Libya and Syria over what they felt were human rights abuses, Russia is following the same

model—intervening in an ongoing civil war taking place in Ukraine where human rights abuses on the part of the Ukrainian military has been recorded and documented by human rights organizations. Double standards, partiality, and confirmation bias is something that will have to be addressed by human rights organizations. Otherwise, various entities around the world will feel justified to act in accordance with how another country was allowed to conduct itself with impunity. The United Nations Human Rights Council set up a commission after the 2021 Gaza War to probe Israel's treatment of Palestinians. The commission is called the Council of Inquiry and they have concluded that Israel's treatment of Palestinians is why Hamas is firing rockets indiscriminately at civilians. But when one considers how the Ukraine war is being covered and investigated, one should not be surprised that Hamas has managed to convince international organizations that their goal is no different than Ukraine's—defending against an occupation. Now going forward, Hamas's actions will not be questioned when escalation resumes in Israel, much like Ukraine's actions during the war with Russia will not be questioned. This is the first time in recent years that Israel has been singled out as catalyst behind the violence in Palestine. The US has condemned the council, and can likely see that ISIS is next in line to become legitimized by international organizations since even they as a terrorist organization can argue that they, much like Hamas and Ukrainian soldiers, are also trying to recapture territory taken from them during an unjust invasion. Human Rights Organizations in recent years have strayed from the more impartial approach and opted to align with political narratives and is now getting into identifying a sole perpetrator, not extracting the civilian population from the military framework, which will further polarize geopolitics around the world. It is clear that the UN and other human rights organization are attempting to make up for mistakes made by them concerning US war crimes, by taking every step to ensure Israel and Russia are held accountable. Still, it creates a standard that does not answer why the US is able to get away with atrocities abroad.

Chapter 4: Ukraine's War Crimes

After the annexation of Crimea, in which the majority Russianspeaking population there voted in a referendum to join the Russian Federation, Russian-speaking separatists in eastern Ukraine began occupying administrative buildings in the Donetsk and Luhansk areas of the Donbas region, subsequently declaring autonomy from Ukraine. A number of pro-Ukrainian residents in the Donbas region were taken captive by the separatists. While some were eventually released, little information has been released on the exact number executed. In April of 2014, there were two cases of summary execution carried out by the separatists which were confirmed. The bodies of Volodymyr Rybak, a pro-Ukrainian activist, and Yuri Popravko, a student who was from Kyiv, were found with signs of torture in the river Torets, near Raigorodok. Still and all, Amnesty International, in investigating claims from both sides, discovered that allegations in many cases were largely exaggerated. However, when this geopolitical affair erupted into armed conflict in June of 2014, escalating significantly in July, the international laws of war became applied to both sides of the conflict.

Between July 12 and July 21st 2014, Human Rights Watch documented war crimes perpetrated by the Ukrainian government forces in the Donbas region. Unlike the Bucha report, HRW in this documentation made it a point to castigate both sides when it came to human rights violations perpetrated by the Ukrainian government forces. This was erroneous because their own evidence showed that separatist fighters or weapons were not in areas in Donetsk that were struck by Ukrainian artillery. HRW reported that unguided grad rockets fired by Ukrainian government forces and Ukrainian militias into residential areas between the timeframe of July 12th 2014 and July 21st 2014 killed 16 civilians and wounded countless others in the Donetsk region. This was a violation of international law which prohibits launching rockets indiscriminately into civilian areas. Keep in mind that this is before Russia began supplying the separatists in Donetsk. Grad rockets are unguided and cannot strike with precision. Despite the report centering around Ukraine's indiscriminate use of grad rockets, HRW did not single out the Ukrainian forces in this report, but also blamed the separatists for deploying fighters and artillery equipment into civilian areas, which according to the report was not the case. Meanwhile, however, Ukrainian forces and government officials denied using grad rockets despite evidence gathered by HRW which made them quite certain that Ukrainian government forces were the ones firing rockets into civilian areas. HRW observed the presence, shape, and angle of impact craters on the ground and on the buildings, and concluded that these were Ukrainian rockets that hit the area. Because of the proximity of the

damage to the separatist positions, HRW concluded that the attacks could not have been carried out by the pro-Russian separatists. Some of the rockets hit separatist checkpoints and civilian areas simultaneously. Three civilians in residential areas in Donetsk were killed by rocket strikes carried out by Ukrainian government forces on July 21st. Two days prior to that, four civilians in Donetsk were killed by Ukrainian rockets fired into residential areas. On July 12th, as documented by HRW, six civilians were killed when Ukrainian rockets struck a residential area in Maryinka. HRW identified the type of rockets used in the attacks--“unguided 122- millimeter surface-to-surface Grad artillery rockets launched from multi-barrel rocket launchers with up to 40 launch tubes.” These rocket attacks violated international law regarding indiscriminate attacks. Regardless, HRW placed some of the blame on the separatists for not making every effort to avoid deployment of military personnel and equipment into civilian areas. However, the residents they interviewed reported seeing no separatist fighters or military activity in the area. HRW also mentioned in the report that Ukrainian war crimes did not justify separatist maneuvers toward civilian areas during the conflict, noting how the separatists ventured towards the town center after encountering Ukrainian rocket fire which struck their base and residential areas. But the separatist only moved to the center after evacuating the civilians there. Nonetheless, HRW pointed out in this report that both sides were responsible for the damage caused by Ukrainian rockets being fired into civilian areas. There could have been some confusion on the part HRW in understanding the statements made by Ukrainian officials concerning Donetsk, that caused them to factor both sides as the catalyst for civilian deaths in the area. In one media report, a Ukrainian military spokesman stated that the military operations undertaken in the Donetsk area by Ukrainian forces on July 21st 2014 was a planned offensive against the separatists and that all artillery fired into the area were only targeting separatist fighters. The goal, he asserted, was to repel separatist forces away from the airport. Another media report, this time in a statement from Andriy Lysenko, a member of Ukraine’s National Security Council, completely denied that Ukrainian forces had anything to do with the fighting in the Donetsk region during that timeframe of residential areas in Donetsk being bombarded by Ukrainian unguided grad rockets. He claimed that it was the private pro-Kyiv militia groups doing the fighting. In essence, one can extrapolate that he is indicating that private militias were causing civilian casualties in Donetsk. HRW spoke to a number of residents in Donetsk, and many of them said that one rocket struck near the train station around 10:30am. Another rocket, one of the residents said, hit the courtyard area of an apartment building, and killed a woman and injured a man. The woman’s name, however, was not verified. When

HRW visited the courtyard, they came across a large crater left by the rocket impact and noticed blood right alongside of it. This was right in the middle of the yard. One of the neighbors told HRW that one man was hit by shrapnel from the rocket blast. They also said that none of the separatist fighters, nor their weapons or equipment was in the area, which contradicted earlier reports that separatist fighters were deploying their forces into residential areas and as such were causing residential areas to be hit by rockets aimed for the separatists. Journalists that were present in Donetsk told HRW that another rocket killed two men near a school. This second rocket was only 100 meters from the one that hit the courtyard and killed a woman. Another impact site was discovered in another residential area, but no verification on whether or not civilian casualties resulted. While HRW was present in Donetsk on July 21st, 2014, they themselves were able to hear grad rockets being fired into Donetsk from the northern part of the city. Because of the intensity of the fighting, there was no way to confirm whether or not more civilians in the area were killed.

On July 19, 2014 in the Kuibyshevskiy district, HRW located five areas in a residential district that was hit by Ukrainian rocket fire on that very day around 4pm. An elderly woman named Valentina Fedorovna who lived on the first floor of the apartment building that was struck by a Ukrainian grad rocket said that she heard a whistling noise turn into a loud bang as she was in her apartment. A short while later a person was knocking on her door asking if anyone was alive. She had been unconscious between the time of the bang and the time someone came and got her out of the five-story building. Another person who lived in the building was hit by shrapnel from the explosion. One piece had gone through her arm, while another punctured her chest. She also heard people in the building screaming in terror. HRW concluded that the rocket had struck the building on the second floor level and traveled through to the first floor where Valentina was at the time. But luckily, the rocket went through the kitchen and bathroom into the basement. She was in the living room at the time, which saved her life. Another rocket hit a courtyard, not far from Valentina's building, and injured four people. One woman had shrapnel from the explosion stuck in her chest. The playground at a school was struck by a grad rocket, and so was a street right in front of a church. HRW reported that a fifth rocket struck a residential home while no one was there.

HRW was certain that the rockets were fired not by private Ukrainian militias, but by the Ukrainian government forces. The trajectory and outcome of large craters in the areas struck by rockets were evidence enough that the rockets were fired by the Ukrainian armed forces. There was also a crater in the school playground which indicated that the rocket had come from a western direction, which further affirmed that it came from the Ukrainian forces since the

front-line situated between the separatists and the Ukrainian armed forces, according to the residents in the Kuibyshevskiy district of Donetsk, were some kilometers west. The separatists confirmed that unguided grad rockets struck their checkpoint and an adjacent area very close to a residential area. HRW investigated the area and confirmed that this was certainly the case. They noticed craters and parts of the grad rocket scattered close to the checkpoint area and the area situated between the residential area and the checkpoint.

On July 12th in the Petrovskiy district in Donetsk, a residential area north of a road that marks off where the frontlines are located was struck by a number of grad rockets fired by the Ukrainian military. Nineteen impact craters were discovered following the attack, and the locals who lived in the residential areas that were struck showed HRW the damage done to their homes. One of the Ukrainian grad rockets struck a home and killed an entire family living on 2 Chugaeva Street. The rocket destroyed the house and garage. Another woman who lived on the same street told HRW that there were no weapons or fighters in the area that justified firing those rockets into the neighborhood. She told HRW: I was in my room when I first heard a whistling sound. The walls and windows started to shake and then there were many loud bangs. My son was in the kitchen. He came running when the attack started, probably trying to save me, but a shrapnel hit him in the leg. What's here that they wanted to attack? There is no factory here, no fighters, just poor houses. Her car was destroyed in the attack, while her home suffered severe damage. Her son was wounded by shrapnel. The local police in the area document seven deaths from the rocket fire and showed it to HRW. It was also concluded that the damage and the areas where the craters from the rocket strikes were indicated that the rockets were fired from an area southeast or further south of the southern separatist checkpoint. All the residents stated that there were no separatist fighters or equipment in the area before it was struck by grad rockets. This contradicts the notion that separatist fighters were using residents as human shields. Nonetheless, HRW blamed both sides for endangering civilians despite the evidence provided to them and which they themselves confirmed. And that same day on July 12th at 10pm, another area was struck by a hail of grad rockets. In the village of Maryinka where 10000 residents live, six people were killed during a rocket attack, while 15 were injured. The village was comprised of residential areas, as well as industrial and rural. One person living where the attack occurred said it lasted about 40 seconds. Overall, twelve apartment building were hit directly by rocket fire and HRW observed pieces of grad rockets both around the residential areas and inside of the apartments destroyed during the attack. Prior to it, the separatists were stationed at a checkpoint 800 meters from the outskirts of the village and a number of separatist

fighters were deployed to the area between the checkpoint and the residential areas of Maryinka. However, they moved closer to the center after the rocket attack by Ukrainian forces and after the evacuation of residents in the area. Before the attack, no separatist fighters were in residential areas that were struck—this was later confirmed by a journalist who was there at the time. The separatists only came afterwards to evacuate the residents there. The commander of the separatist fighters reported that 22 rockets hit the checkpoint and residential areas. While evidence showed that the rockets came from Ukrainian government forces, a journalist spoke to HRW and told them he spoke to pro-Kiev militia forces stationed in Novomikhaylivka, a village southwest of Maryinka. And they bragged to him about acquiring a grad rocket system that they were using against the separatists. Another person said he observed rockets being fired from the area southwest of Maryinka. The use of grad rockets on civilian areas in eastern Ukraine by Ukrainian forces ultimately provoked Russia into the conflict. Hence why the very next month in August of 2014, Russia announced they were deploying military aid and equipment to the separatist controlled areas in eastern Ukraine.

Later that year on September 23, 2014, it was reported in Russian media that mass graves were found in the Donetsk region in the villages of Komunar and Nyzhnya Krynka. The area had been controlled by the Ukrainian forces' Aidar battalion and the 25th Paratrooper Brigade, up unto 2 days prior on September 21st when the separatists gained control over the villages. The Russian media station covering the situation showed on air 2 graves, with a dead female body in each one. The reporter there was escorted by separatist fighters. The bodies appeared to have suffered torture with each having their hands tied behind their backs. Other media outlets confirmed the report, adding that one of the women killed and buried was pregnant at the time of her death. Aleksandr Zakharchenko, who was serving as the Prime Minister of what the separatists were now calling the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), told one reporter that there were three grave sites in the area, one with 40 non-combatant civilians. The two other grave sites consisted of dead soldiers on both the pro-Ukrainian side and pro-Russian separatist side. Shortly thereafter, on the 26th of September, Amnesty International arrived in the area to investigate the claims. They interviewed the locals, as well as DPR officials and fighters stationed there. Amnesty International is headquartered in the UK and is a non-governmental human rights organization. Human Right Watch, on the other hand, is headquartered in the United States in New York. Amnesty International, overall, seem to be more impartial than Human Rights Watch. In the villages of Komunar and Nyzhnya Krynka, Amnesty International found pertinent evidence that Ukrainian forces carried

out at least four extrajudicial executions during the military operation. However, when it came to the total number, Amnesty did not find as many as had been claimed. They found three grave sites consisting of nine dead bodies, four of which were civilians that were summarily executed. One site was located in the village of Nyzhnya Krynka near a military checkpoint with a memorial of flowers and a sign stating “died for Putin’s lies” with each of the victim’s names and Russian military ID. A DPR fighter told Amnesty International that the men were conducting recon on the area, but went missing, either presumably captured by Ukrainian forces before being executed or killed in combat. It was not clear as to which. The other two grave sites were located near Komunar village at Mine 22. Each grave had two dead bodies that had already been dug up. Pavel Strukov who was the chief investigator over-seeing the investigation reported to Amnesty International that four male bodies were found there. The locals said that both Komunar and Nyzhnya Krynka were controlled by Ukrainian government forces between August 16th and September 22nd of 2014. On September 22nd, separatist forces reclaimed both areas. Amnesty confirmed that the grave sites were made when the Ukrainian government forces and private pro-Kyiv militias were in control of the villages. At least three local residents are believed to have been executed by Ukrainian government forces after last being seen alive on September 11th 2014. One civilian found near the Komunar village near Mine 22 was that of 21 year old Nikita Kolomeytsev who had volunteered for the separatist forces working as a staffer at a check-point, according to his family. He went into hiding when pro-Kyiv forces took over Mine 22 near Komunar village. A few days after he left, Ukrainian forces came to the house of his family and questioned them, looking for information on Nikita and destroying the house in the process. The family reported to Amnesty that the insignia they were wearing were that of the Dnipro-1 battalion. One neighbor, according to Nikita’s mother, said that he saw Nikita get arrested, but this person was not interviewed by Amnesty International. Nikita’s body was later identified by the mother, and local police concluded he was killed by gunfire. Around the same time of Nikita’s disappearance, two other residents went missing. Both lived across the street from each other and grew cannabis inside their homes. One of the victims had been seen visiting checkpoints both when the DPR forces controlled the village and when Ukrainian forces controlled the village. According to his aunt, he disappeared after visiting the outpost when pro-Kyiv forces controlled it. His name was Sergey Tsarenko, a 26-year old man. His friend, Igor Shipilka, age 60, was also a cannabis grower, and went missing after last being seen taken captive by Ukrainian soldiers on September 12th. A third person Vladimir Yashenko, age 55, went missing around the same time as the others and according to

residents who lived near his home, his home was occupied by Ukrainian soldiers after he disappeared. Amnesty International could only confirm the extrajudicial execution of Nikita Kolometsev who was found with his hand bound together. Enforced disappearance and extrajudicial execution is a violation of international law.

In looking back, we see how denial among both parties in the conflict affected international investigations. Both human rights organizations, the Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International typically held both parties in the Donbas War liable to the international laws of warfare. When it came to Bucha, however, the Human Rights Watch failed to inquire about the behavior of civilians taking part in hostilities during the time Russia occupied the area—were there actions on the part of civilian-turned-combatants that endangered civilians in the residential areas. Were the Ukrainian fighters firing at Russian troops from residential neighborhoods? The reason this is relevant is because after the unjustified invasion of Iraq by the United States, international human rights organizations held the insurgency in Iraq liable to international laws of warfare, even as they were defending their country from an unjustified invasion. According to the Human Rights Watch “The laws of war do not outlaw insurgent groups or prohibit attacks on legitimate military targets, but they restrict the means and manner of attacks and oblige all forces in a conflict to protect civilians and other noncombatants.” The Ukrainian Special Operations Forces were present in Bucha and initially provided resistance against the Russian invasion before being pushed back by the Russian troops. The Russians occupied Bucha throughout March of 2022. Human Rights Watch, however, did not factor in the potential of this operations unit conducting irregular warfare tactics that could have endangered civilians. The Ukrainian Special Operations Forces consists of 2000 personnel, split into 7 regiments among the army and navy. They are trained by the CIA for insurgency warfare and are the main recipients of western military aid. Their presence is very low key and as of yet, there has been no confirmation on Ukrainian SOF casualties during the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, male civilians looking to flee the country were ordered to stay or face mandatory conscription into the Ukrainian military. On March 3rd 2022, a week after Ukraine declared Martial law throughout the country in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a decree was made by the Ukrainian government that civilians who get weapons have the legal right to fire upon Russian soldiers and will have the same rights as Ukrainian soldiers. This decree under the Geneva convention essentially made anyone in Ukraine who had a weapon a “combatant.” The decree also made it legal for those armed Ukrainian civilians to kill Russian soldiers in Ukraine. In doing so, any armed

civilians in Ukraine became subject to international laws meant to protect civilians during armed conflict. Those Ukrainians who chose not to take up arms but stay in Ukraine were entitled to protections that both sides of the conflict had to honor. In the case of Bucha, as defined under the Geneva Convention on who is legally a combatant, those who took up arms upon the approach of the Russian military convoy into Bucha fell under the definition of combatant under Geneva Convention:

Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949.

Article 4 A (6) (6) Inhabitants of a non-occupied territory, who on the approach of the enemy spontaneously take up arms to resist the invading forces, without having had time to form themselves into regular armed units, provided they carry arms openly and respect the laws and customs of war.

Those who fell under this this definition were required by international law to disembark from civilian areas, as those Ukrainian civilians who did not participate in hostilities against the Russian forces were protected by International Humanitarian Law. This law was applicable during the Donbas War and is the case following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. While it was confirmed that Russia violated those protections during their occupation of Bucha, killing a number of innocent civilians disproportionately to any resistance they may have faced from Ukrainian civilians, the Human Rights Watch, unlike their approach of blaming both sides for the initial firing of grad rockets upon civilian areas by Ukrainian forces in 2014 before Russia got involved in the conflict., failed to mention the role that combatants firing upon Russian soldiers in residential areas had on endangering other non-combatant Ukrainian civilians in the area. Both sides of the conflict were subject to take every precaution to protect the civilian population:

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE EFFECTS OF ATTACKS

Article 58 -- Precautions against the effects of attacks

The Parties to the conflict shall, to the maximum extent feasible:

(a) without prejudice to Article 49 [Link] of the Fourth Convention, endeavour to remove the civilian population, individual civilians

and civilian objects under their control from the vicinity of military objectives; (b) avoid locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas; (c) take the other necessary precautions to protect the civilian population, individual civilians and civilian objects under their control against the dangers resulting from military operations.

We can observe how back in July of 2014 when it was clear to HRW that the separatists took every precaution to avoid civilian areas (residents confirmed there were no weapons or fighters in the area) as Ukrainian forces fired grad rockets into civilian areas, they still nonetheless even after documenting such evidence, implicated both sides as not doing enough to protect the civilian population. In Bucha, HRW didn't question what impact Ukrainian "combatants" had on the situation or what steps combatants on the Ukrainian side were required by international law to take in minimizing damage to civilian areas and civilians. Amnesty International on the other hand did note in their report on Bucha and other nearby villages concerning the possibility of Ukrainian soldiers endangering civilians in the area. This part of Amnesty International's report called "HE'S NOT COMING BACK: WAR CRIMES IN NORTHWEST AREAS OF KYIV OBLAST" documented the killing of a 15 year old boy, Igor Denchik, and his aunt, Ludmila Shabanova, by Russian soldiers right outside of their basement where the rest of the family was taking refuge. The Russian soldiers had banged on the door and thrown tear gas into the basement before ordering everyone rushing out the basement to get on the ground. That was when the 15 year old boy and his aunt were shot dead. There around 40-50 people in the basement, according to the boy's grandfather. Afterwards it was reported that weapons were found in the house. Here is the excerpt from Amnesty International's report:

"Timoshenko and another building resident said that in the days following the killing of Igor Denchik and Ludmila Shabanova they learned that the soldiers had searched the basement of the house and found some weapons and/or ammunition which Ukrainian forces or volunteers had recovered from a Russian armoured vehicle which had been struck and immobilized by Ukrainian forces in the area. If in fact Ukrainian forces or volunteers had hidden weapons in a residential building full of civilians, such action would have endangered the safety of the civilians, contrary to their obligation to take all feasible precautions to protect civilians under their control from the effects of attacks, including by avoiding locating military objectives within densely populated areas."

Amnesty International also stated in that same report, but regarding

the town of Borodyanka, that there was evidence that Ukrainian soldiers were using residential buildings to fire upon Russian military. On March 1st and 2nd, the Russians conducted a series of airstrikes upon residential buildings where 600 families lived. Most of the occupants of the building had gone to find shelter in the basement and many killed as a result of airstrikes were killed in the basement area. 40 civilians were killed when the damage caused many of the buildings to collapse. While it was clear that the attack was disproportionate to the threat, Amnesty International nonetheless pointed out the potential evidence that Ukrainian soldiers endangered civilians by using the apartment as a base to fire upon Russian military:

There is some evidence that at least at certain moments Ukrainian forces or their armed supporters were using the buildings as a platform from which to fire upon Russian military vehicles transiting the area. A resident of one of the buildings, who spoke on the phone and sent text messages to a relative before his building was hit, said that Ukrainian snipers were on the rooftop and behind the building shooting at Russian convoys; he was afraid that this would lead to Russian retaliation. If it is true that Ukrainian forces were firing from the buildings, they were irresponsibly putting civilians in danger and violating the laws of war. Nonetheless, given the substantial number of civilians that would be expected to be found in these buildings, such large-scale Russian attacks were both disproportionate and indiscriminate under international humanitarian law, and as such constitute war crimes.

While Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International are both western based, Amnesty International has shown itself far more impartial than Human Rights Watch on its coverage and inquiry into events pertaining to the Ukraine/Russia conflict. Human Rights Watch is more concerned about how an international affair confirms the politically charged narrative in the US, as opposed to how the international affair, for example the Russia/Ukraine war, is built upon those events which led up to the conflict and are directly related to the two nations involved in it. The United Nations has also been affected by the US political framework in their inquiry into the Israel/Palestine conflict following the 2021 Gaza War. Ultimately, it could be perilous for the international community to allow the schismatic political framework in the US to poison the sober outlook of geopolitical events that is required for maintaining a stable and integrated global community. While Amnesty is affected by that as well, they still seem to be able to retain some sobriety on global geopolitical issues, and this is why it is imperative for Russia to reinstate Amnesty's offices in Russia.

While western backed human rights organizations ignored what maneuvers Ukrainian forces may have used in Mariupol, maneuvers which could have endangered civilian areas, it was reported by an Italian journalist named Vittorio Rangeloni, who has been in the Donbas region since 2015, that following the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, members of the Azov regiment were using residential neighborhoods in Mariupol to fire upon Russian military, before setting the homes on fire upon leaving. In his report, he interviewed a number of residents in Mariupol after the hospital and theater attack and documented their revelations that members of the Azov regiment started taking defensive positions in residential areas, as well as in schools and hospitals after the Russians bombed Azov military bases soon after arriving in Mariupol in late February. According to the Italian journalist's report, because their military instillation was destroyed, Ukrainian and Azov soldiers began abandoning their trenches and started deploying into residential areas as selfpreservation began to take over. As the report would state, this made it easier for Ukrainian soldiers but imperiled the civilians. This video was filmed on April 15th, 2022 and uploaded to Youtube on April 30th. Here is the testimony of some of the Mariupol residents.

One women in Mariupol who was interviewed stated: We lived for 10 days in the basement. I live here, on the 9th floor. The apartment is still there.....I'd like to say I still live here, half the building being destroyed. I hope they help us to rebuild. From here you can see how it was hit. They were cornered so they[Ukrainian army] went it, they entered the building..... They came in and started to open all the doors, from the 4th to the 8th floor on this side, said they had to control the streets.

Another woman in Mariupol was interviewed by Rangeloni: I live here, in Stroitelny Street. We were kicked out by the Azov soldiers so we went back to the house that was burned on Metallurgov street until the guys from Donetsk helped us, giving us food, drink, and calming us. We didn't even know what was going on. They had forced us to escape. They[Azov regiment] launched Molotovs, according to their plans.....Before leaving, they set fire to our house. The building was all destroyed. Only a few apartments remained. That's where we are now. They[Azov] went around like zombies. We asked them why did they shoot, told them not to do it, but they said it was the Russians shooting. And yet we saw with our own eyes how they set fire to the house. They gave us 15 minutes to pack our things, saying there would be planes bombing later. This was in the morning. There were no planes. They burned down the house and they left towards the sea coast.

This is an interview with a man who gave Rangeloni a tour of a damaged apartment building: *Here there were many ammunition boxes.....This is also their stuff (he points to weapons the ground near a window along the staircase). They broke all locks and shot from the windows of the apartments. They broke into all the apartments. This is a MON (anti-personnel mine). They [Azov] sent everyone away...This is what they used to open the doors(pointing to a piece of metal on the ground) ...Here is a machine gun, and there the barrel(he points at the gun near the window along the stairwell). They were on the fourth floor, teared down the walls joining all the apartments. When they[Azov] left, they burned everything.*

A woman in Mariupol was interviewed: *It's sad, when we ourselves are Ukrainian citizens. This Army that doesn't defend us, should at least not harm us. When you get home and they tell you to go away because they must build barricades and live there, it's horrible. We are Ukrainian citizens like them, they have their obligations, but we are victims of the events. Back there you can see the Azovstal. Here the first bombs fell.*

(The interviewer then asks from what direction did they come)

... She replies: *From there [From the direction of the Azovstal factory]. from the very beginning. Even when there were still no Russians in this area. We had the impression they wanted to destroy it on purpose. They targeted the houses, you saw them, all without roof. My impression is that it was on purpose, so that it didn't belong to anyone. Yes, despite that many people lived here, now they're left without anything, everything it took them a lifetime to build.*

Here is an interview with a group of people interviewed—3 women and a male. (the interviewers asks them where do you live now) *In the basement.....8 people in the basement. 11 in the stairs. We share a basement. There were 4 days of bombing. It started when Ukrainians entered the building. They left on the forth day. They dropped something from the top floors. A 16 year old boy had his foot cut. The soldiers said to piss on it and he would recover. There were 120 people in the basements. The Ukrainians fired[from the houses]. They occupied two floors. First they said they would only coordinate, but then they started also to fire from here. It started from that, and then continued. When we got out, we were shocked. We found RPGs on many floors. Here there were many children. We tried to cook here over a fire under the whistling of the bombs. We*

got out to ask them to move away, but we were ignored. They didn't want to see us. They said they were following their orders. They said "we are defending our land" But we don't know what they defended. They had no interest in the 120 people living here with cold, hunger. This is how it happened

-This was from the transcript of the video which was posted online on April 28, 2022 by user V-N Rangeloni. Here is the url of his video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ec6d-JRStw> This is his video with the English translation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y55wF4lo470> uploaded online by user Tom.

While such evidence should evoke western suspicion, neither HRW nor Amnesty International had at that time yet to launch an inquiry in Mariupol concerning where Ukrainian forces were deploying during the time of the siege. The one-sided narrative put forth by the west has cultivated a great deal of mistrust, and has compelled many in the west to rely on alternate sources of information in order to develop a broader scope on exactly what is happening throughout the conflict.

On June 27th 2022, Russian forces fired rockets into central Kremenchuk, Poltava Oblast, striking a shopping mall and a nearby factory. The name of the factory was the Kredmash road machinery plant, and was believed to be a military target housing western weapons. The Russians fired 2 Kh-22 anti-ship missiles from the Shaykovka air base in the Kaluga region. The first missile reportedly hit the far end of the Amstor mall, causing the shopping center to become engulfed in flames. The second missile struck the Kredmash factory, decimating the structure and leaving a large crater. Immediately following the attack, it was reported by western media that 1000 people were inside the mall, but from video evidence, this turned out to be a gross exaggeration typical of initial reports involving the war in Ukraine. The exaggeration led to allegations on social media that Ukraine was conducting a false flag operation. However, Russia took responsibility for the incident but insisted that they were targeting the factory, not the mall. Such an answer was not out of line with international standards as the US, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and countless other countries are given a pass to carry out these type of military actions targeting what they believe are military targets, irrespective of collateral damage. The governor of Poltava Oblast reported that 20 people were killed, while 56 people were injured. 36 people still remained unaccounted for. These numbers were a far cry from the 1000 initially reported to have possibly been injured or killed. Videos posted on social media showing the immediate aftermath of the missile strike when the mall caught fire, showed a minimal level of pedestrian traffic nowhere near indicative of 1000 people possibly being inside the mall at the time of the strike.

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The mistrust evoked by such exaggeration led to widespread skepticism as opposed to the large scale outcry that such a tragedy should evoke.

Chapter 5: Amnesty International

After Russia shut down the Amnesty International Moscow office in April of 2022, the human rights organization became somewhat less impartial in their investigation of atrocities in Ukraine. Amnesty had a history of pointing out the necessity for both sides of the conflict to operate in a way that keeps the civilian population out of danger. But when Amnesty International released their Khariv report “ANYONE CAN DIE AT ANY TIME: Indiscriminate attacks by Russian forces in Kharkiv, Ukraine”, it was clear that their approach had become one that nearly absolved Ukrainian forces from actions on their part which endangered and killed civilians, despite Amnesty documenting in that same report that Ukrainian forces were indeed deploying into residential areas as well as firing artillery from there. In addition, the report only documented civilians killed or injured by Russian artillery fired into residential neighborhoods. There were no reports of civilians killed by Ukrainian artillery, despite the same report admitting that Ukrainian forces were firing on Russian forces from residential areas. The report also only applied condemnation towards Russia for the use of cluster bombs even as the report basically insinuated that Ukrainian forces used them as well. This approach by human rights organizations in not keeping civilians out of and distinct from the framework of military conflict and crossfire hurts their credibility and questions the need for them since by doing this, they only serve as the propaganda arm for military forces. There are times when the perpetrator is obvious and can be singled out, but in some reports documenting evidence in which it is clear that both sides are endangering the civilian population, the organization reporting the incidents still, in this case, manages to place the responsibility only on one party. In the first few years following 9/11 when the US was considered to within their right to enact justice for the victims of 9/11 by invading Afghanistan, no one and no organization would have dared at that time questioned the actions of US forces. This lack of objectivity and impartiality on observing what was happening on the military front allowed the US to act with impunity and also guilt trip anyone who would dare question them. But after their indignation was complete, scores of innocent civilians have been killed, and now after the fact in hindsight, people are now alert to something they should have been vigilant about from the start. It may have saved innocent lives. Just observe how successful the diplomatic process was during the Donbas conflict prior to 2022 when consistent engagement by France and Germany, as well as human rights organizations’ willingness to point out when both sides of the conflict were endangering civilian lives led to an agreement between both sides of the conflict which set in motion a natural process in which the breakaway regions would have slowly been

reintegrated back into Ukraine. But now, as of 2022, the new manner of approach which downplays wrongdoing by one side will further polarize both parties in the conflict and stifle the potential of both Ukraine and Russia coming to a consensus. The moment either side feel as though they are no longer being watched, the atrocities will ensue. Prisoners will be tortured, and civilians will be rounded up at a far greater rate than has happened thus far during the war.

Kharkiv, like Mariupol and Bucha, was engulfed by intense shelling starting from February 24, 2022. Kharkiv was one of the areas of Eastern Ukraine that was nearly taken over by pro-Russian separatists back in 2014. At the time, most of Kharkiv was pro-Russian, and after Crimea joined the Russian Federation, a group of separatists in Kharkiv wanted to establish a KPR(Kharkiv People's Republic), but were stifled by Ukrainian security forces and pro-Ukrainian officials in the region. Despite Ukraine keeping Kharkiv from becoming a breakaway region like Donetsk and Luhansk, unrest still occurred in 2014 and 2015. There were shootings and bombings which killed people, both pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian. But over the years leading up to Russia's full scale invasion, Kharkiv was coming to terms with the pro-western Ukrainian movement. This in effect led many who lived in Kharkiv to adopt a neutral political outlook, keeping their Russian nationalism in check. After the separatist attempt to take over Kharkiv was stopped by Ukrainian forces, the city had come under the control of the SBU, the Security Service of Ukraine, a police agency that has carried out extrajudicial killings against proRussian citizens.

Back in March of 2014, violent confrontation occurred in Kharkiv between pro-Russian groups and Ukrainian nationalists and led to the killing of two pro-Russian demonstrators during the clashes. While much of the population, both pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian, tried to steer clear of the hostilities, they were nonetheless influenced by the unrest and divided politically as a result. The pro-Russian activists declared the KPR on April 6th 2014, not long after the DPR was established in Donetsk. Shortly thereafter, however, their attempt at autonomy was destroyed by Ukrainian security forces when they forced the pro-Russian activists out of the regional administration building. Still and all, pro-Russian groups continued to fight the Ukrainian forces through other methods of terrorism. The Ukrainian Security Service uncovered and stopped 39 terrorist acts from occurring. Despite the vigilance by Ukrainian authorities, pro-Russian terrorists in February of 2015 set off an IED at Euromaidan march for Euromaidan victims, killing 4 people in the process. The sporadic violence continued, and several combatants engaged in gun battles. Many explosions which occurred in the region as a result of storing ammunition were attributed to acts of sabotage carried out by terrorists. An explosion in Balaklia killed two people, and damaged

300 homes. Amid the incidents of violence in Kharkiv, it had nonetheless become the designated refuge for those displaced by the war in Donbas. It was estimated that close to 400,000 people ended up in Kharkiv, which placed a huge burden on the economy and hospitals. Not to mention, some of the displaced were not welcomed with open arms due to the strain their presence put on the cost of living and access to social services. Many could not afford to pay rent and at the same time, could not secure a job that could keep up with the standard of living.

A number of human rights groups have documented the actions taken by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) against pro-Russian activists, actions that involved extrajudicial violence. Between 2014 and 2018, 1000 people are arrested and held over incidents stemming from the unrest and separatism taking place throughout eastern Ukraine. The constant threat of terror led to some human rights violations on the part of the SBU. A number of these violations which were documented by human rights groups included enforced disappearances and torture. There has also during this time been a lack of initiative on the part of Ukraine to uphold accountability for crimes perpetrated by far right groups that often attacked the LGBT community. There had also been no move towards acquiring justice for the victims of the violence in Kharkiv whom were simply caught in the middle of hostilities between far right groups and separatists. And much like Kharkiv, there had also been no justice for the victims in the Odessa tragedy where pro-Ukrainian groups in May of 2014 set fire to the House of Trade Unions where pro-Russian activists barricaded themselves in refuge from the pro-Ukrainian groups shortly after clashes near the city center. Forty-two pro-Russian activists, which included 7 women and a boy, died in the fire as local police and late-arriving fire-fighters did little to protect them. Odessa has been another case of how western bias on the part of human rights organizations enabled impunity to prevail.

In Kharkiv, prior to the Russian invasion, recovery from the Euromaidan unrest and pro-Russian separatism was largely slowed by favoritism and political pressure, which oftentimes manifested at the legal level in cases where the defendants would be acquitted and saved from facing punishment for crimes against political opposition. Accountability was still largely neglected there, and while many pro-Russian groups began to assert neutrality, the tensions regarding Ukraine's lack of initiative to bring justice to victims of ethnic clashes allowed much of the hostility to fester, albeit in many cases, quietly. A number of allegations against Ukraine regarding the treatment of pro-Russian activists were never investigated. Such as the allegation about secret prisons in Kharkiv where political opponents would secretly be detained without anyone knowing of their whereabouts over a two year period. However, both the pro-Russian and

pro-Ukrainian element in the administrative and judicial sector has played a role in suppressing adequate accountability. For example, Nelia Shtepa was on trial on charges of separatism/terrorism, but since the judges who may have leaned along a similar political framework as the defendant, took every effort to avoid taking up the case due to political pressure to ensure her conviction, no justice would be end up being served there. Another example is how when former mayor of Kharkiv Gennady Kernes, a pro-Russian separatist turned pro-Ukrainian, was charged with kidnapping and torture of two Euromaidan activists, he ultimately was set free due to prosecutors not attending any of the hearings, which led to the case being dropped. And this was largely for political reasons. This problem in Ukrainian politics is a major reason why President Zelenskyy was so popular in Ukraine and won the presidential election in 2019 in a landslide. One of his goals was to fix this issue of corruption in the judicial system. Zelenskyy was also very keen on healing the rift between Russianspeakers and Ukrainian speakers in Ukraine. The post Euromaidan/pre-Russian invasion era had also seen a largely unchecked police force operate in a way that intimidated political activists with tactics such as labeling and torture, which much of Kharkiv had come to tolerate. This led many of the pro-Russian elements in Kharkiv to drift over to the fringes. Regardless, despite the backdrop of Euromaidan fueled unrest, only 7% of the population there supported being integrated into Russia, according to a poll from 2017. Kharkiv's importance to Russia is heavily motivated by its past. Kharkiv was basically the Silicon Valley for the Soviet Union, a legacy left largely intact after the USSR's collapse. Sporting a metropolis with some impressive skyscrapers, prior to the Russian invasion the city, and much like Silicon Valley, Kharkiv cultivated many highly skilled and technical IT experts, but of whom would usually leave the city to work elsewhere. Even before the Soviet Union, Kharkiv was established as a result of the treaty of Pereyaslav between Russia and Bohdan Khmelnytsky, the founder of Ukraine. The treaty made the country a protectorate of Russia in 1654. Subsequently, it became the major Ukrainian industrial center of the Russian empire and at one point was the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Despite the rich legacy, it was also the place where some of the greatest atrocities of the Holodomor took place in the 1930s. Right at the outset of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Russian troops began a massive assault on Kharkiv, shelling civilian areas regularly throughout the campaign. As a result, hundreds of civilians have been killed as Russian troops used cluster bombs to destroy many structures in residential areas. Amnesty International has documented that Ukrainian forces were also firing from residential areas, and may have been using cluster bombs as well. Russian forces initially laid siege to Kharkiv with an air and

ground assault along with rocket strikes, but Ukrainian forces were able to resist the first advance of Russian forces there, steadily pushing the Russians back. However, the fierce shelling continued to ravage residential areas as of April 30th. A woman named Oksana was gravely wounded while walking in a park with her husband and daughter as a cluster bomb exploded nearby at the playground. The event completely transfigured their lives, as well as many others in Kharkiv. Oksana later died in June. The local director of Kharkiv's Regional Military Administration confirmed that roughly 600 non-combatants had been killed from the start of the war in late February until late April. The governor of Kharkiv reported that 600 residential homes were destroyed by Russian artillery by mid March. Amnesty International between April and May investigated sites in Kharkiv where 60 civilians were killed as a result of being in areas that were hit by Russian artillery. They also had weapons technicians on hand to identify the type of fragments collected and which weapons they came from. A number of these fragments turned out to be from the aftermath of bombings in which cluster munitions were used. The use of land mines were also prevalent in the area, and so were grad rockets. It was concluded that these strikes by Russian forces were indiscriminate and took place between late February and late April, causing hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee. The governor estimated the number to be somewhere around 600,000. Those who remained were told to get into shelters that contained a basement, many of which were located in subways and schools. Amnesty International pointed out that repeated use of unguided missiles even when knowing in advance that they could cause civilian casualties is a war crime in itself.

Russia was never able to gain a foothold over the city due to strong Ukrainian resistance. They tried in late February and early March, but were repeatedly driven back and left having to rely on aerial and artillery bombardments. The shelling would subside by early May as Russian forces continued to retreat and prepare for a counter offensive. Meanwhile, Ukrainian forces were able to reclaim some of the areas previously under Russian control. While on the retreat, Russian forces continued bombarding Ukrainian neighborhoods with artillery strikes and cluster bombs, which are banned by international law. On Myru Street, nine Ukrainian civilians were killed by Russian strikes. In one of the victims hurt there, doctors found fragments from munition strikes. Many of the victims had been located in areas near the strikes such as in parks and courtyards. One woman, Tetiana Ahayeva, had come out of her basement to get some air before shortly encountering a cluster bomb explosion nearby. The neighbor's son would be killed instantly as a result of the explosion, and his father suffered severe wounds from the shrapnel. Tetiana's own son was wounded in the stomach by

cluster munition pellets.

Bohdan Burlutsky, who lived nearby, was in his car when cluster bombs exploded at a courtyard near a residential building. Instantly, a number of cars were ablaze and he and many others were injured. Some people were killed. This attack occurred on Myru Street. Not far from there, a woman named Olha Sadovska was with her husband simply sitting down on a bench at a park when a cluster bomb exploded and injured both of them. Others in the park were also hit, including two boys playing ping pong. These cluster bombs landed in random places in residential areas and it was often the case that residents at the time of the explosion had prior to it, gathered that much of the danger was dissipating, only to be mistaken when the bombs would all of a sudden explode. One cluster bomb was placed outside of a shop, killing a bystander instantly. He was just waiting outside as his wife was in the store buying pet food. The woman who described the incident to Amnesty International said that she was almost hit in the head with shrapnel that came flying through the window. And that was followed by more explosions. The scene was horrific as many people tried to find cover inside the store. And not far from there, another store where people were standing in line for outreach help, there nearby another bomb exploded, causing mass panic and injuries as shrapnel flew everywhere. Another explosion occurred out the Akademika Pavlova station which injured a number of people standing at the entrance. One person named Ruslan was in his car with two policemen, a 13 year old boy, his brother, and mother when the explosion happened. A man standing outside the car named Sadagad was injured by the explosion. Ruslan, who was also injured by shrapnel, rushed to get Sadagad into the station, from where he would be transferred to a hospital.

A man named Sasha was on his bike just leaving the post office when an explosion occurred and injured him. He was wounded in the arm and chest, but avoided taking shrapnel in the back thanks to an axe he had in his backpack which absorbed the shrapnel and prevented it from entering his body. He credits that for saving his life. Amnesty International has pointed out that the Ukrainians have also been deploying into civilian areas, and the New York Times reported that Ukrainian forces fired cluster bombs into Russian occupied areas. One example of such was in the village of Husarivka which is in the Kharkiv region. The New York Times reported in an article entitled "To Push Back Russians, Ukrainians Hit a Village With Cluster Munitions" by Thomas Gibbons-Neff and John Ismay, that Ukrainian forces were using cluster bombs to drive the Russians out of the village. In an NYT interview with Yurii Doroshenko, he revealed that a rocket holding cluster munitions landed near his home. It turned out that it was not fired by the Russians, but by the Ukrainian forces, who have been using cluster bombs since October of 2014

during the war in Donbas. Back then, Ukrainian forces as well as Russian forces were cited by human rights organizations for their use of cluster bombs which violated international human rights laws and killed scores of civilians in Donetsk. Shortly after the Russian invasion, Ukrainian forces were still using them on Russian held territory regardless of civilian presence. In that particular strike that Yurii references, no civilians were killed. But throughout the month as Ukrainian forces continued to shell civilian areas, two civilians were confirmed to have been killed by Ukrainian forces as Ukrainian troops tried to recapture the area. The Amnesty International report has largely singled out Russia for the use of cluster bombs. However, the laws of war are applicable to events going back to the war in Donbas, which is when the ICC designated the conflict as an international war between Ukraine and Russia.

Cluster munitions are a combination of “rockets, bombs, missiles, mortar and artillery shells” that break open in mid air and scatter throughout a particular area. Many of the munitions which land there can explode at a later time. The US, Ukraine, and Russia are not signatories to the Convention on Cluster Munitions which banned the use of them starting in 2010. Some in the international human rights community were not surprised to hear that Ukraine as well as Russia was using cluster bombs. However, the international condemnation of Russia’s invasion has led some NGOs to turn somewhat of a blind eye to Ukraine’s use of banned weapons. And this likely due to a sentiment on their part that largely agrees that Ukraine is justified to do whatever it takes to reclaim their territory, even indirectly endangering and killing their own civilians in the process. Many NGOs that are excusing Ukraine in this case should no longer consider themselves to be in the interest of the civilian population, but only interested in the international political consensus of the moment which upholds that Ukraine has the right to do what ever it takes to reclaim territory unjustifiably captured by Russian forces. At the same time, NGOs must be very careful with such an outlook when entities like Hamas and ISIS are able to argue that their goals are no different than Ukraine’s—to essentially drive out an occupying force.

While Ukraine has not denied the use of cluster bombs, they have released a statement following the release of the NYT article saying: *“The Armed Forces of Ukraine strictly adhere to the norms of international humanitarian law. One of our constant priorities is the security of the civilian population. We do not open fire or destroy civilian objects, nor do we use weapons and methods prohibited by the Geneva Conventions.”*

The cluster munitions that struck near Yurii’s home is reportedly the first time that Ukraine has used cluster munitions during the war post February 24, 2022. The launchpad for the explosives was mounted on a truck a few miles away.

HRW reported that the Russian forces were using cluster bombs since the very start of the invasion. In Kharkiv as shelling continued from both sides of the conflict, Amnesty International documented a case where two cluster munitions launched by Russian forces landed inside of Holy Trinity Church. The munitions had gone through the roof. The church was used for humanitarian outreach and is usually active most of the day. The bombs exploded on the roof and blew shrapnel into the rooms that had been populated just minutes prior to the attack. The Pastor there showed Amnesty International exactly where the damage occurred and how the shrapnel was able to penetrate the walls. Subsequently, pieces of 220mm Uragan rocket which holds 30 cluster munitions were discovered outside in front of the post office. Other parts from the exploding cluster munitions were also found in the area. Moreover, the immediate area surrounding that church had been previously struck by shrapnel from other strikes and explosions. The day after Holy Trinity Church was struck by cluster munitions, it was hit by another rocket strike that landed in the church's courtyard. There were no casualties in that instance. A Saltivka neighborhood was repeatedly shelled since the start of the Russian invasion. The artillery strikes killed two civilians on April 26th 2022. Among those injured from the blast was Nina Nosonenko and her husband whom were outside of their home when the explosion occurred. Her husband told Amnesty International that the sound leading up to the explosion was not the typical whistling one can hear before a grad rocket strikes. The sound he heard was a crisp sound that lasted shorter before the explosion. He and his wife, Nina, took cover by running away instead of falling to the ground. He was hit with shrapnel, but after a second explosion, Nina was badly injured. The husband recovered, but Nina remained in the hospital with damaged lungs and an injured back. In the same neighborhood, two elderly women were killed when cluster munitions exploded at a building entrance outside where they sitting with two other people at a bench. After they heard a first explosion occur across the street, they tried to get inside the building. But as they attempted to take cover there, another explosion went off, killing the two older women, and injuring the other two people. One of the women was so badly injured that she had to have her legs amputated.

Seven civilians were killed amid massive shelling and exploding cluster bombs along Heroiv Stalinhrada Ave on April 3 rd. On Monyuska Street, two civilians were killed during an explosion that occurred near a bench. A resident from the building near the explosion said she saw the two dead civilians covered in blood, as well as other dead people who just happened to be in the area. She also reported that shrapnel from the explosion had penetrated her home, nearly killing a neighbor who just managed to escape death by moving away from the window just prior to the explosion. Not far from

Monyuska Street, another civilian was killed when a cluster bomb exploded. The shrapnel from the blast hit a nearby shop and injured the owner, who had tried to save the life of the man killed by the explosion. This occurred on Fonvizina St where Amnesty International located dozens of craters and pieces of cluster munition along with damage to property. Some of the explosions spanned over 100 ft of street area, leaving a number of craters and dead bodies in its wake. In a suburb area, two civilians were killed inside their homes as explosions blew shrapnel across a series of homes along multiple streets. One person, Oleksandra, reported that her brother was killed after coming out to the garden to rescue her from the explosions. After getting her inside, he was hit by shrapnel which ruptured a main artery in his leg and killed him. Not far from there, Ivan Aiuvszy was killed after shrapnel hit one of his main arteries. Another man will killed by shrapnel while he was visiting the grave of his deceased father. He was with his relatives at the time when the explosion happened. They survived with injuries, but he died as a result of the explosion. His niece, Kateryna, gave an account of the incident to Amnesty International, who found several craters where the explosion happened, along with a number of tombstones damaged by pieces of cluster munition. The Uragan rocket carrying the munitions landed on a farm nearby.

On Amosova Street, dozens of people were killed by artillery strikes conducted by Russian forces between mid March and mid April. The cluster munitions used were comprised of antipersonnel mines which sets off a cascade of explosions. One woman in an apartment reported glass shattering everywhere after hearing an explosion. The room directly above her was struck directly and one of the residents there was killed. She mentioned that damage to the walls left her trapped in her room where the door would not open. The person staying in the first floor apartment room beneath her was killed, and she had just arrived there from the Saltivka residential neighborhood where artillery bombardments were constant. Ironical, considering that her whole purpose for going there was to get away from shelling in her own neighborhood. This would serve to underscore just how perilous things were for residents in Kharkiv. One of the residents of the apartment building reported a number of civilian deaths in the apartment building without disclosing their names. His tragedy was only hours after an explosion at a playground which injured five people. The worst injury in that case required a foot amputation.

Amnesty International was able to narrow down exactly which type of rocket was fired into civilian areas. Upon investigation at multiple sites in Kharkiv, they were able to conclude that the weapon launched was 220mm Uragan rocket containing 30 individual munitions, each containing steel pellets. These rockets are unguided

and after they are launched, they release the sub munitions while in flight, dispersing them over an area as extensive as 100 square meters. Many of the munitions don't explode on impact, but can do so at a later time which essentially turns them into land mines. The scale of damage this type of weapon causes is why the international community moved to ban them in 2008 at the Convention of Cluster Munitions.

On March 1st 2022, Russian forces fired rockets that landed on Nova Bavariya Avenue, killing seven residents that lived in the residential building just opposite a crane factory which was also struck. There were pieces of Uragan rockets left from the explosion. Kostiantyn Neshcheret lost his mother, brother, and friend, all of whom were near the front of the building when the rocket hit. He had gone to the store and that was when the blast took place. Others who were killed like Iryna Lisovska, Yurii Shestеров, and Stanislav Bacanov all died inside their apartment. Roma Demianenko was killed as he stood outside the building and was "blown to pieces" as one person described it. Meanwhile, the hospitals were inundated with wounded patients from the blast, many of whom were hit while waiting in line for humanitarian assistance. Residents described the horror of living through the conflict and the aspect of dealing with not knowing which day you will live or die. One person described the situation in Kharkiv to be akin to a game of Russian Roulette. In many cases, people are going about their daily program and then all of a sudden were being maimed or killed by unexpected rocket fire. Some people were sheltering in the basement and upon going up just for a minute, a blast would hit the area. One person, a 59 year old woman named Tetiana Oleksandrivna, on March 13th had only left her basement for a minute before she was struck by shrapnel from an explosion. Her neighbor had only gone out to smoke before he was killed by the strike. In Kharkiv, there was no way to apprehend when danger would manifest. A 60 year old man was sweeping the floor in the hallway entrance to his building before he was struck and killed by a rocket. On April 23rd, Oleksandr Marchenko suffered multiple wounds trying to get into a building to escape a number of explosion nearby on Heroiv Pratsi Street. As soon as he made it to the entrance, he was hit by shrapnel in his stomach and back, which punctured his lungs and liver. Several others in the area that day were killed by the explosions.

One woman named Veronika had to have her right leg removed after an unguided rocket hit a playground near her house in the Saltinkva residential area on March 12th 2022. Several people were killed and injured, according to Amnesty International. Veronika was on a bench when it happened and recalled hearing that all too familiar whistling sound that occurs before a rocket strikes its target. All she remembers after that is being in the hospital without her right

leg. She often suffers phantom leg syndrome, where she would feel an urge to scratch her foot that is no longer there. The suffering endured by civilians during war should make everyone rethink their support of any country's military objective. In modern warfare, the civilian costs is enormous and in many cases, those civilian components of a nation would just prefer for hostilities to end, no matter the political costs. When people get caught up in the geopolitics, it becomes easy to forget about other aspects that are very much part of the conflict. There have been numerous foreigners go to Ukraine to fight, only to leave shortly thereafter upon seeing firsthand the devastation of an artillery strike. And in Kharkiv, the devastation seemed endless. A 63 year old woman was hit by shrapnel as she stood outside of a grocery store on February 28th . The store was not far from where she lived on Klochkivska Street, and she was standing in line outside the store at the time of blast. Just before the rocket hit, other people in line took cover and ran away from the area. However, she told Amnesty International that she was paralyzed by fear and ultimately lost her leg as a result of the explosion. Another man on Amosova Street, 63 years old man named Yurii, lost both feet when a rocket struck his apartment building while he was inside laying on his sofa. This occurred on April 30th .

On March 3rd, Hanna Lakhno, Konstantyn Lymar, and Andrii Ihasimo were all killed by artillery bombardments in the Saltivka neighbourhood. All three were friends. Hanna and Konstantyn were preparing to leave the city; they had their belongings packed and were ready to evacuate. But shortly after, as they were standing outside of the building where they lived, along with their friend Andrii, they were struck by rocket fire which obliterated them. Konstantyn was blown into pieces, and the other suffered a gruesome outcome as well, all of which made it hard for their bodies to be properly identified. Not far from the tragedy on the same day, another area in the neighborhood which had previously been struck by shelling, leading to the death of a civilian, encountered another strike. A 62 year old man was injured in the strike as he was inside his apartment. He related to Amnesty that three shells penetrated his apartment. The injuries he suffered led to his arm being amputated. Another person who lived on the same street(Buchmy in the Saltivka neighborhood) reported seeing four residents killed by shelling near building 36 as the paramedics were trying to provide aid to those injured in the blast. Throughout much of the shelling, residents had only a small window of opportunity to evade the strikes, but in many cases they could not know from where or which direction the shelling would be coming from. In many instances, people could hear a whistling sound followed by a blast. On March 3rd, there were two people who were killed while trying to get to safety in their car. This was a mother and son. The son was trying to get his mother out of the area, but both

ended up being killed by the shelling. The tragedy of civilian deaths is even more pronounced when in many cases the victims were maimed, killed, and obliterated right in front of their loved ones. In other cases, death would occur in the most inconspicuous circumstances. One man named Yurii, 60 years old, was killed by shrapnel from an explosion on Heroiv Street just as he was asking two people sitting in front of a building entrance for a cigarette. It has all too often been the case in Ukraine, that many of the victims were not anticipating death at the time it happened. In one such case as the Saltivka neighborhood continued to be shelled relentlessly, two people recalled being hurt by rocket fire on a day that they did not expect any shelling. In fact, prior to the strike, as one of the residents recalled, it was quiet with no indication that danger was imminent. And then all of a sudden an explosion from outside shattered the window. The woman who lived there was wounded in the leg by shrapnel as her and her husband were trying to evacuate the apartment and get to the basement. As we see in these incidents documented by Amnesty International that the level of carnage cannot be understated. In many instances, an entire family would be in their homes as one of the family members there would be killed by a shell as they inhabited a different room in the house. This was what happened in the Tkachov household. The father Serhii Tkachov was killed in a strike on his home as other members of the family survived due to being in a different part of the house at the time of the blast. The wife was in the bedroom, the son was in his bedroom, while the father, Serhii, was in the kitchen where the blast occurred. It caused the ceiling to collapse on top of him, trapping him as fire engulfed him. His family witnessed this.

In a suburb situated near the edges of Kharkiv where Ukrainian forces were blocking the Russians from entering the city, shelling killed a man named Konstantyn inside the entrance to a house. In another example of shelling on March 16th, the victims did not hear the typical whistling sound that indicates a rocket will blast nearby. Another man named Konstantyn was sitting in front of his home with four others when shelling hit an area just a few feet away from his house. The shrapnel blew into his chest and killed him as he bled to death. Amnesty International in their Kharkiv report documented that Ukrainian forces were deploying their troops and equipment into residential areas, which confirms other reports ascertaining similar allegations. Amnesty also mentioned that Ukrainian forces were using such tactics that endangered civilian lives. According to the Amnesty International report “ANYONE CAN DIE AT ANY TIME: Indiscriminate attacks by Russian forces in Kharkiv, Ukraine”, it was reported to them that Ukrainian forces were launching strikes from the Industrialnyi, Shevchenkivskyi and Saltivka districts. Civilian casualties were rampant in the Saltivka neighborhoods as

documented by Amnesty. However, in main body of their report which described specific incidents of casualties in the Saltivka district, Amnesty did not mention or document cases where Ukrainian forces were firing nearby and thus triggering Russian artillery back into the civilian areas. The only documented cases in the report of Ukrainian forces deploying into residential neighborhoods was in a note near the end of the report. Amnesty International was present in the Saltivka neighborhood when they heard “outgoing fire” on April 26th . Residents on Buchmy street, according to the report, said that shelling started on February 25th when Ukrainian forces “*deployed a Howitzer on the street opposite Building 36, roughly 120 metres from it.*” One resident from the Saltivka neighborhood told Amnesty International that “*After two or three hours of this Howitzer beginning to shoot, we received opposite fire from the Russian side,*” And according to the Amnesty International report: “*he added that the howitzer was first located on the street in front of a garage shop, and was then moved to the nearby courtyard behind the garage, and after three days it was moved out of the area but Russian forces continued shelling for several weeks. Amnesty International delegates inspected the site, finding vehicle tracks consistent with military activity, as well as a large crater from a strike right next to where the resident said the Howitzer was parked. The site was guarded by a man who said he was a former soldier, and who restricted access to the area. In Pokotylivka, a suburb southwest of Kharkiv, Ukrainian Territorial Defense Forces used some small outbuildings in the yard of the compound of a medical laboratory as a base. The compound is surrounded by residential buildings and is located opposite a school which serves as a humanitarian hub. The laboratory was bombed by Russian forces – an apparent air strike -- on the morning of 28 April. Although the medical laboratory was mostly empty, as most employees worked remotely, two employees who were present were injured. In addition, two members of the Territorial Defense Forces were killed and six injured. At the site, near the outbuildings in the compound, Amnesty International researchers found several empty munitions boxes, some of which had labels indicating that they had contained KPOM-2 scatterable mine canisters.*”

Amnesty International did not mention Ukraine’s use of cluster munitions, but did ask them to refrain from using them. In April of 2022, Russia has removed the registration of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, as well as other non-profit organizations over western bias. However, Russia should reconsider re-instating Amnesty International’s Moscow office since while Amnesty has been caught up in the western sentiments regarding the perception of the war being unjustified, Amnesty has still, nonetheless, shown that they

will document all evidence regardless of which side it implicates, even though at times Amnesty may still only convey a greater condemnation towards one side of the conflict. There willingness to at least adhere to fair documentation should be seen as something conducive to a satisfactory outcome for both sides of the conflict. Delays in applying scrutiny to both sides of a military conflict only serves to imperil civilians, leaving them at the mercy of the armed forces perceived to be within their right to take action. This was the case for the US military during their initial invasion of Afghanistan. Immediately following the 9/11 tragedy in 2001, the wave of outcry demanding justice for the victims of 9/11 had a pervasive impact on a global scale, but ultimately, in retrospect, put Afghan civilians at the complete mercy of US military objectives which at that time could not be questioned by any entity without them being seen as siding with terrorists. Had a hard-line neutral observer remained astute from the outset of the war, scores of lives may have been saved. But all too often, the horror of civilian death is only recognized in hindsight when it is too late.

On July 3rd, 2022, Ukrainian forces fired 3 Tochka-U missiles into the Russian city of Belgorod, causing 4 civilian deaths in a residential area. The missiles were shot down by Russia's airdefense systems, but the smash-up caused fragments of rocket debris to fall onto and destroy the homes and residential areas just below. This is the first time since the conflict began, that Russia has suffered civilian casualties from the war. Ukraine denied responsibility but said that it was karma because of all the civilian deaths in Ukraine caused by Russian forces. Ukraine's Interior Ministry believed that Russia orchestrated the attack in order to justify its military purposes. Eleven apartment buildings and 39 homes were destroyed. The victims included a family from Kharkiv who had migrated to Belgorod in order to escape the fighting. Western media downplayed the incident, while Russia insisted that the strike deliberately targeted the civilian population in Belgorod. This comes on the heels of the Russian missile strike in Kremenchuk, which destroyed a factory believed to have been used for military purposes, as well as a nearby mall where civilians were killed. Both incidents mark a point of dangerous escalation in the conflict, where both sides may seek revenge on the other by targeting outright, any civilian infrastructure. Since Russia had dismissed all of its western-based human rights investigators, the west would have no way of assessing the scope of civilian casualties caused by Ukrainian forces. This leads to both sides pushing a onesided narrative that justifies protracting the conflict. In order to avoid this, Russia may need to reinstate Amnesty International, which is perhaps the only human rights organization that has proven, despite their western lean and anti-Russian outlook, to be willing to document infractions by both sides of the conflict.

Chapter 6: Mercenaries in Ukraine

Russia continued to warn the west about supplying Ukraine with heavy weapons. Much of the weapons aid to Ukraine from western countries started back in 2014, when it was mostly non-lethal weapons being sent. The US however didn't start supplying high tech weapons to Ukraine until 2018, sending Javelin anti-tank missiles. Turkey also sold some of their drones to Ukraine in 2019. Much of the supply sent to Ukraine was instrumental in Ukraine's defense against Russian forces in the western part of the country. The influx of weapons steadily increased in the months leading up to the Russian invasion when countries like the UK decided to supply Ukraine with anti-tank weapons. Germany, however, didn't really get around to supplying Ukraine with heavy weapons until some time later after the Russian invasion. While western countries have individually supplied Ukraine with military aid, NATO as a military bloc has refrained from sending weapons to Ukraine. The most critical piece of aid which could have allowed Ukraine a more adequate defensive operation would have been fighter jets, but the west refused to provide such, fearing escalation. Russia had begun threatening to use its nuclear capability against western nations if the west tried to provide fighter jets to Ukraine. There was some speculation that the west would nonetheless attempt to get f-35 fighter jets into Ukraine, but after some miscommunication, such arrangements never fell thru. At one point the US confirmed they were prepared to supply the jets, but within 24 hours walked back the announced and denied they would be providing Ukraine with the f-35s. NATO also refused to send troops into Ukraine to help them fend off the Russian invasion. However, there was no shortage of anti-tank weapons supplied to Ukraine. 20000 of them were sent to Ukraine following Russia's invasion. Both the EU and the US sent billions of dollars in aid to the country to help bolster their military and protection protocols for the civilian population. By April, the total number of anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons totaled 25000 and 60000 respectively. By May, Ukraine had altogether received 12 billion dollars worth of aid from western countries. This was followed by another pledge from the US to provide 40 billion dollars worth of military aid.

Both Russia and Ukraine has been aided by the presence of foreign troops. Western media companies such as Reuters would refer to Russia's middle east volunteer fighters as mercenaries, while Russia would use similar terminology to describe Ukraine's volunteer fighters from the UK and the US. The breakaway regions in Georgia sent troops to Ukraine to help Russia. For Ukraine, many of the foreign fighters had come from other parts of Europe, and the Ukrainian government offered to drop visa requirements for anyone coming from abroad to fight with the Ukrainian military. Zelenskyy

formed the International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine and relegated it for foreign troops. Altogether 20,000 foreign nationals from 52 countries ended up in Ukraine fighting against the Russian forces. Nearly 66,000 Ukrainian that were living outside of the country returned to help Ukraine fight the war. The US, meanwhile, provided critical intelligence assessments on Russian troop location which allowed Ukraine to sink Russian ships and kill Russian generals.

When it came to the topic of foreign fighters a clear double standard was applied, which ultimately backfired when volunteer soldiers from the UK and the US had ended up being captured by DPR and Russian forces. Despite repeatedly calling Putin's volunteer fighters "mercenaries", the US and UK media companies and government officials insisted that the those British and American fighters fighting with Ukrainian forces on behalf of Ukraine were volunteers and not mercenaries. Situations like this is when the media has to be careful of the policy they set for others, because it will decide one's ability to persuade all parties of one's own status. The double standards applied only serve to imperil more lives in the war. At this point going forward all volunteer fighters, both on the Ukrainian side and Russian side have to be considered volunteer fighters protected under the Geneva Convention.

Two British and a Moroccan fighting in Ukraine alongside Ukrainian forces were captured by DPR forces and later sentenced to death. Following the sentence, both the UK and the United Nations insisted that the captured fighters were not mercenaries, but prisoners of war protected under the Geneva Convention. This comes after western media repeatedly calling Russia's volunteer fighters, "mercenaries", making the UN and other western organizations seem hypocritical. Ukraine's foreign ministry also stated that all foreign fighters fighting for Ukraine should be protected under the Geneva Convention and be regarded as POWs, not mercenaries.

During the war in Iraq, volunteer fighters were repeatedly referred to as "mercenaries" by US forces. Now in Ukraine, US officials are working tirelessly to guarantee POW status for two American fighters detained by Russian forces. Both American volunteer fighters were captured by Russian troops after being left stranded by their unit. They had been fighting in Kharkiv. Both were US military veterans. Alexander Druke, formerly US Army, did two tours in Iraq. The other American fighter captured, Andy Huynh, was a former US Marine. Both were operating in Ukraine and taking orders from the SBU, Ukraine's Security Service, and were told to provide cover so Ukrainian forces could retreat. Upon retreat the Ukrainian forces were being followed by Russia tanks. Meanwhile, Huynh had been at an outpost with an RPG getting ready to fire upon the Russian tanks after it open fired on the retreating Ukrainian

soldiers. When Huynh did fire his RocketPropelled Grenade, it missed. After the Ukrainian forces had left the area, leaving Huynh and Drueke stranded in the woods, the American fighters eventually stumbled into a village nearby, and that is when they were confronted by Russian troops and had no choice but to surrender. American officials insisted that the soldiers were not mercenaries, but prisoners of war. But Russian officials have already concluded that they were mercenaries fighting as “soldiers of fortune.” When the two American fighters were interviewed by RT, they warned other Americans who were thinking about coming to fight for Ukraine to reconsider. They also said that they were being treated humanely by their Russian captors, but were aware that they could face the death penalty. During the RT interview, both Americans admitted to have been swayed by the western narrative of the war, and ultimately ended up disappointed with the lack of preparation and corruption within Ukraine’s “International Legion.” The testimony is very similar to other foreign fighters that managed to escape Ukraine and make it back to their home country. Subsequently, after leaving Ukraine’s international legion, the American volunteer fighters both sought to join a more tactical unit. This when they discovered the ‘Task Force Baguette’ in eastern Ukraine, a unit comprised mostly of American and French veterans. Russia considers the unit to be a foreign mercenary group. While US officials are working hard to secure their release, the US state department continued to urge American not to go to Ukraine.

After Russia invaded Ukraine, Zelenskyy, like President Putin, announced that his country was accepting volunteer fighters. Subsequently, with the aid of western media, many citizens in the western world were compelled to join the fighting. There are also foreign fighters in Ukraine that are organizing outside of the command of the Ukrainian army. However, those Americans joining the fight in Ukraine are in danger of not only being considered mercenaries if they are captured by the enemy, but are also in danger of violating the Neutrality Act if they join Ukraine’s forces within US territory or organize a militant group against Russia within the US. The law also forbids Americans from fighting against a country that is at peace with the United States. Currently Russia is at peace with the US, so according to the Neutrality Act, Americans, when they are within the United States, joining the military of another country or forming their own private groups to fight against a country that the US is not at war with is a violation.

The Neutrality Act states in 18 U.S. Code § 958: Any citizen of the United States who, within the jurisdiction thereof, accepts and exercises a commission to serve a foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people, in war, against any prince, state, colony, district,

or people, with whom the United States is at peace, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

The Neutrality Act states in 18 U.S.C. 959: *(a)Whoever, within the United States, enlists or enters himself, or hires or retains another to enlist or enter himself, or to go beyond the jurisdiction of the United States with intent to be enlisted or entered in the service of any foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people as a soldier or as a marine or seaman on board any vessel of war, letter of marque, or privateer, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both. (b)This section shall not apply to citizens or subjects of any country engaged in war with a country with which the United States is at war, unless such citizen or subject of such foreign country shall hire or solicit a citizen of the United States to enlist or go beyond the jurisdiction of the United States with intent to enlist or enter the service of a foreign country. Enlistments under this subsection shall be under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Army. (c)This section and sections 960 and 961 of this title shall not apply to any subject or citizen of any foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people who is transiently within the United States and enlists or enters himself on board any vessel of war, letter of marque, or privateer, which at the time of its arrival within the United States was fitted and equipped as such, or hires or retains another subject or citizen of the same foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people who is transiently within the United States to enlist or enter himself to serve such foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people on board such vessel of war, letter of marque, or privateer, if the United States shall then be at peace with such foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people.*

The Neutrality Act states in 18 U.S. Code § 960: *Whoever, within the United States, knowingly begins or sets on foot or provides or prepares a means for or furnishes the money for, or takes part in, any military or naval expedition or enterprise to be carried on from thence against the territory or dominion of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people with whom the United States is at peace, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.*

The reason for the Neutrality Act was to protect America from being drawn into a war as a result of actions taken by American citizens against a nation that the US is not at war with. The American fighters captured seemed to have joined fight in Ukraine from Ukrainian territory, which would not be in violation of the Neutrality Act. The Neutrality Act forbids Americans on American soil from privately organizing against a nation that the US is not at war with. It also

prohibits anyone in US territory from planning, intending, of saving money to go to go to another country to fight against a nation that the US is not at war with. A danger posed by Americans going to Ukraine to fight is that it can easily be construed by Russian officials as something that is condoned and authorized by the US government, a perception that could escalate and broaden the conflict. The US has repeatedly stated to the American public that Americans should not be going to Ukraine to fight.

A number of foreign volunteer fighters that went to Ukraine to join the foreign legion reported a serious lack of preparation on the part of unit commanders. Many of the volunteers were given no training, no weapons and still placed in dangerous situations. It was also observed that many volunteer fighters who had previously served in the US military during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were completely frightened and unprepared for combat involving an advanced Russian military. Many of them were compelled to flee Ukraine after seeing that fighting the Russian army was vastly different from fighting against insurgents in the middle east who had no air force and no advanced weaponry. In many cases, the fighting in Ukraine involved little to no contact with Russian military personnel, and it was often the case that fighters spent most of their time cooped up in trenches taking refuge from constant artillery bombardments. A Belgium newspaper called *Het Laatste Nieuws* said over half of the foreign fighters that went to Ukraine already left the country after initially feeling called to go and fight. Many who fought with NATO and US forces were not use to fighting without air support and medics, two of which were absent for many units fighting in Ukraine. Moreover, a major fear concerning foreign fighters in Ukraine is that Russia could, in the event of capturing American fighters, accuse the US of deploying them to Ukraine, which could ignite a serious escalation that both the US and NATO has been trying to avoid since February 24, 2022 when Russia launched a full-scale assault on the country. Meanwhile, Ukrainian forces had become concerned about the strain that under-trained foreign fighters are placing on military operations. Because many of the foreign fighters are unable to speak the Ukrainian language, they are thus forces to stay alongside someone who can speak their native language, which in turn makes them inflexible in terms of how the Ukrainian military could make use of them.

Chapter 7: POWs and Refugees

When it comes to POW count, the numbers have been difficult to verify. Ukraine's ambassador reported that a platoon from the 74th Guards Motor Rifle Brigade operating in Kemerovo surrendered to Ukrainian forces early in the war and said that they were not aware of orders to kill Ukrainian soldiers. Russia says that they have 572 Ukrainian soldiers in custody as of March 2nd, 2022. while Ukraine has reported having 562 Russian soldiers held captive. This was as of March 20th. The first prisoner exchange was conducted and involved 10 Russian POWs being exchanged for five Ukrainian POWs along with the mayor of Melitopol, whom was in Russian custody. In late March, 21 Russian POWs comprising of soldiers and sailors were exchanged for 29 Ukrainian POWs consisting of soldiers and sailors. At the beginning of April, more Ukrainian POWs were exchanged in a prisoner swap for an unverified number of Russian troops. Both Ukraine and Russia were urged by international human rights organizations to stay in compliance with international law concerning the treatment of prisoners. Ukrainian troops were posting videos on social media in which they were humiliating Russian troops in their custody. One video showed a Ukrainian soldier shooting Russian POWs in the knees, while another uploaded to Telegram showed a Ukrainian soldier executing a Russian prisoner. Ukraine has subsequently launched an investigation into the incident. Russian troops were also posting videos which showed that Russian soldiers were humiliating Ukrainian POWs, forcing them to sing songs of a pro-Russian theme. Many of the Ukrainian POWs shown in the videos had bruises, which evoked concern from UN human rights monitors.

Since February 24, 2022 when the Russian invasion began, eastern Europe has had to face the greatest European refugee crisis since the Yugoslav war in 1999. However, preparations for this was made in advance of the war when Ukraine estimated the amount of evacuations that would have to be conducted. Many of the surrounding nations had plans in place to deal with mass displacement of Ukrainians. Just in the first seven days after the start of the invasion, a million Ukrainians fled the country. The number would rise significantly higher as the war went on. By late May, the number of evacuees was estimated to be close to seven million. The vast majority of these were women, children, and the elderly. Men in Ukraine at the time of the invasion were not allowed to leave the country. This went for not only ethnic Ukrainian men between 18 and 60, but also for non-Ukrainian men living in the country. If a man was either a single father, supporting more than three children, or supporting children that were disabled, then he was allowed to evacuate the country. Despite the restrictions, many men in Ukraine chose to fight regardless. Altogether within Ukraine, the remaining

Ukrainian residents displaced were roughly in the range of 8 million. The UN High Commission for Refugees tallied the number of refugees from Ukraine situated in neighboring countries as a result of the war. This was as of May 13th. In Poland, there were a little over 3 million Ukrainian refugees there. In Romania, 901,696. In Hungary, Moldova, and Slovakia, there were close to 500,000 Ukrainian refugees in each of those countries. Belarus took in about 27000 Ukrainian refugees, while Russia had taken in around 800,000. As of late March, over 300,000 were in the Czech Republic, and around 80,000 evacuated to Turkey by April. Ukrainian exodus from Ukraine was followed by the EU invoking the Temporary Protection Directive, which would give Ukrainians a temporary citizenship in the EU country they are taking refuge in, in which they would be able to secure housing and employment.

Ukraine fears that refugees evacuated from Ukraine to Russia might be sent to camps in separatist regions or within Russia. Russian had evacuated around 121000 Mariupol residents, and Ukraine is concerned that many of them will end up in prison camps and forced into slave labor meant for helping develop new cities. Ukrainian security officials reported that Russia is planning to build a concentration camp for Ukrainian refugees. Many evacuees that had lived in the southeastern parts of Ukraine that were not hit by military activity have expressed a desire to return.

Russia since the invasion in February of 2022 has experienced an outflow of people seeking refuge from political constraints implemented by the Russian government. The fear of Russia's crackdown on dissidence has caused 300,000 people living in Russia to flee in what has been the biggest exodus of Russians from Russia since 1917 when the Bolshevik Revolution was taking place. Many of them were highly skilled workers critical to the Russian economy, and a few of them tried to go to Ukraine to help Ukrainians fight the war, despite themselves being Russian. By May, it had been reported that nearly four million Russians vacated since the beginning of the invasion.

Ukraine, known as the bread basket, of Europe is one of the biggest exporters of grain. They account for nearly 9% of the world's wheat. But wheat is not the only commodity that Ukraine exports. They also export maize, barley, and rapeseed, accounting for 13% of the world's supply for each. Ukraine is a massive exporter sunflower oil as well. But the Russian invasion has led to food shortages, especially in countries that rely on Ukraine's exports. Right before the war began, 6 million tons of wheat were all set up to be exported from Ukraine—this along with 15 million tons of corn. However, the war would prevent those food supplies from leaving Ukraine, thereby disrupting a very sensitive supply chain, which would lead to a ripple effect of food shortages. Russia, a major exporter of fertilizer and

other components critical to soil health, was also blocked from exporting much of its goods due to sanctions applied against them. The book “The Fall of the US Dollar: A Second Coming of the Non-Aggression Pact” argues that sanctions levied upon Russia will only work in Russia’s favor and only cause the Russian ruble to grow in value:

Due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, worldwide sanctions have been imposed on Russia. These have caused inflation in Russia to rise to nearly 10%, and many analyst are forecasting it will surpass 20% by the end of March 2022 as the Russian currency, the Ruble, continues to collapse. Russia relies on imported goods such as cars, household appliances, televisions and smartphones, but multiple sanctions levied by the west against Russia has effectuated massive price increases among those products. The price of new cars rose 15%. Russia is also worried about how a reliance on imports for its agricultural industry, such as potato seeds will affect the economic situation. In response to the rising inflation and as a measure to stabilize prices, Russia’s Central Bank has raised interest rates to 20%. According to the BBC, the sanctions applied against Russia for invading Ukraine in 2022 are as follows: The United States banned its oil and gas imports from Russia. The UK said they would gradually phase out their Russian oil imports by 2030. And Germany and the EU pledged to reduce their reliance on Russian oil by seeking alternative sources of energy before 2030. The west has also frozen Russia’s foreign holdings of dollars and euros, and restricted banks from doing business with Russia’s central bank. Some of Russia’s banks are being restricted from the SWIFT banking system, which will prevent them from conducting international transactions. This would also delay any accounts receivable owed to Russia for its oil and gas exports. The UK has frozen the assets of all Russian banks, and restricted their access to the UK financial system. The result is that Russia would not be able to raise funds or borrow money within the UK. A number of goods have been restricted from being sent to Russia, while the UK, US, EU, and Canada have banned Russian airlines from its airspace. Assets belonging to Russian president Vladimir Putin has been frozen as well. Russia in response has banned much of their exports to the west, exports which consist of various products, such as telecoms, medical, vehicle, agricultural, electrical equipment and timber. Russia has also stopped making interest payments to foreign investors holding Russian government bonds, and they also squeezed the liquidity of stocks and bonds held by foreign investors. In light of these developments, one can see how the sanctions will have a detrimental impact on western Europe. Not only in terms of acquiring adequate energy supplies, which might no longer be

provided by Russia, but also in terms of food production. Russia and Ukraine account for a third of the world's wheat/grain and barley exports, but now with these sanctions levied upon Russia by the west, along with Russia retaliating by stopping its wheat/grain and fertilizer exports, much of the world that is dependent on such food supplies will have to face the prospect of significant food shortages, and at the same time deal with the impact of how fertilizer shortages will disrupt the very sensitive farming protocols, which could keep crop yields very low. Places like Egypt, Tunisia, and Lebanon are dependent on grain/wheat imported from Russia. Everything considered, Ukraine and Russia are basically world powers in the global food supply industry.

These sanctions against Russia present a catch 22. In one sense, Russia is cut off from the financial sector in the west, but at the same time, they will be able to accrue a surplus inventory from oil and grain production. This leaves the likelihood that Russia will become a major player in ethanol production, as many industries around the world are seeking to transition from 100% petroleum to using a mix of petroleum and biofuels, before eventually going 100% biofuel. With wheat shortages in the west and the middle east, Russia would be able to become the major player in ethanol production since ethanol is produced from wheat and corn, which would be in surplus amounts in Russia as a result of halting their export. This prospect could coincide with a spectacular Ruble recovery, should Russia decide to sell ethanol in exchange for rubles and at the same time undercut US corn production by refusing to export nitrogen fertilizer. This would in effect stifle US ethanol production because without adequate fertilizer, the west would not have the surplus corn to produce greater amounts of ethanol. In this scenario, much of the corn would have to be designated for human consumption. As a result of the competition being eroded in the ethanol market, the rising Ruble would not undermine the competitive viability of Russia's export of ethanol fuels, should those fuels be sold for Rubles. The extra wheat and corn could also be used as a bargaining chip in places like the middle east and Africa, whom will insist on resuming grain imports from Russia. In this manner, Russia could seek out ospolitik-type agreements in which Russia would attempt to normalize relations with other nations by being granted some media influence in exchange for grain shipments or fertilizer. This would be for the sake of controlling how Russia is viewed as a nation within other countries. This would also give Russia more influence in the middle east in terms of being able to mediate peace between warring nations, despite Russia belonging to a consortium of Shiite nations like Syria, and Iran. A growing dependency on Russia's production of oil, gas, and ethanol blends would bring the west back into Russia's sphere of influence, should urgency about carbon

emissions continue to grow worldwide. This would also coincide with a greater global demand for Rubles, which would allow Russia to stimulate their economy by safely increasing the amount of rubles circulating within their financial system.

The sanctions, while only meant to hurt Russia, has also compromised the economic security of other European countries. The oil embargo against Russia drove gas prices higher, which led to the US imploring Saudi Arabia to offset this effect by flooding the market with more oil—a prospect that would hurt OPEC profit margins. Meanwhile, many of the countries reliant on Ukrainian and Russian exports are underdeveloped and are thus at great risk of severe food shortages. Eritrea imports nearly all of its wheat just from Ukraine and Russia, while other nations in Africa and Asia imports over 30% of their wheat from both countries. Ukrainian officials reported that Russia was stealing much of Ukraine's grain and sending them to Russian occupied ports for export and trade. They also reported that a vast array of farm equipment was taken from Ukrainian farms and sent to Russia. All of these acts would further exacerbate the food supply crisis and raise the risk of potential worldwide famine.

In addition to food disruption, the war in Ukraine has led to damage of critical infrastructure. The Kozarovychi Dam was struck by Russian artillery, which caused flooding near the Irpin River. Luckily, Ukraine was able to protect the Kyiv Dam because had that been destroyed, areas of Kyiv would have flooded, which would have led to the destruction of other dams along the way. Flooding in Kyiv could have made its way to the Zaphorizhzhia Power Plant and caused catastrophic damage. During the war, Russia in one of its main goals, opened the flow of water into Crimea by destroying the dam that Ukraine built on the North Crimean Canal for the sake of keeping Crimea from accessing its water flow.

There were some reports that Russian officers were killing their wounded and that Russian soldiers were killing their generals. In other reports, Russian officers have been committing suicide. Apparently some Russian soldiers were hurting themselves just to be sent home. Ukrainian intel released a phone conversation between a Russian soldier and his girlfriend in which the Russian soldier was telling her that he was planning on hurting himself so that he could be discharged. Another conversation intercepted by Ukrainian intel revealed that one Russian commander had shot himself in the leg in order to escape combat duty. Also, there have been demonstrations in Russia against the war in Ukraine, while mothers of boys drafted into the Russian army have tried to take steps to get them out of the war.

During the invasion, a number of cultural sites in Ukraine have been destroyed by Russian forces; other artifacts of high value have been relocated to Russia. Russia in fact has special ops groups

designated for that main purpose. The looting of art and other historical artifacts would negatively impact Ukraine's tourism sector.

On June 29th, Ukraine and the Donetsk People's Republic carried out its largest prisoner swap of the war, each exchanging 144 soldiers previously held captive. Ukraine secured the release of 144 of its soldiers, while the DPR secured the release of 144 soldiers comprising of DPR and Russian troops. Still hundreds of Ukrainians remain unaccounted for, and are believed to be held at secret Russian detention sites. Many of the Ukrainian soldiers released during the June 29th prisoner swap were in bad condition, still suffering from shrapnel wounds and other battle injuries. 43 of those released were from the Azov regiment. Hundreds more, however, remain in captivity.

The very next day, Russian troops withdrew from Snake Island, allowing the passage of grain export. This was how Russian army spokesman Igor Konashenkov worded it, saying: "the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation finished fulfilling the assigned tasks in Snake Island and withdrew the garrison that had been operating there.....this solution will prevent Kyiv from speculating on an impending grocery crisis citing the inability to export grain due to total control of the northwestern part of the Black Sea by Russia." While Russia reported the withdrawal to be a measure of goodwill on their part, Ukraine reported that the withdrawal was a retreat on Russia's part as a result of Ukraine's constant artillery bombardment of the island. Natalia Humenyuk, a spokeswoman for the Ukrainian Military's Southern Command, said in an interview with Espresso TV "that a powerful rocket artillery assault that we have been conducting for some time, during the entire military operation, on this small enemy outpost has achieved its goal. They truly understood that they have to do the right thing, gathered their things and got out as soon as they could,"

Chapter 8: The Prisoner Swap Deal

In the book “Anthony’s Treaty,” one of the main angles proposed for peace to end the Donbas War as it stood before February 24, 2022, was that Ukraine would allow water to flow into Crimea. Ukraine’s blocking of the flow of water into Crimea was a major flashpoint during the Donbas conflict. Now that tensions have escalated and Russia has launched a full-scale invasion of the country, talks going forward will now require that Ukraine cede territory to Russia. This at the moment seems like the only conduit to peace. Otherwise, Ukraine’s future will depend on direct western intervention which will put much of the world at risk of being impacted by a conflict where nuclear escalation would be imminent. So far, since the Russian invasion began, a number of ceasefire talks have been orchestrated. Just a few days after Russia launched their operation into Ukraine, officials from Ukraine and Russia met in Belarus to discuss setting up evacuation corridors for Ukrainian civilians, but no deal was ratified, even after meeting on three different occasions. In early March, Russia initiated a 5 ½ hour ceasefire to allow civilians to evacuate Mariupol and Volnovakha, but this was disrupted by shelling. Ukraine and Russia accused each other of violating the ceasefire. The Red Cross had gotten involved as a facilitator and admitted that attempts to establish humanitarian corridors didn’t manifest. On March 7th, Russia demanded that Ukraine assert neutrality by cutting ties with NATO and canceling the intention to join the bloc, as well as recognize Crimea as part of the Russian Federation and the two breakaway regions, the Donetsk People’s Republic and Luhansk People’s Republic as separate from Ukraine. These demands were followed up with a ceasefire by Russian forces in Kyiv and other cities around Ukraine. Zelenskyy, throughout the war has sought to speak directly with president Putin and has stated that Ukraine will not join NATO, but will seek a security deal with other nations individually. Zelenskyy also refused to recognize Crimea as part of the Russian Federation or the breakaway regions in the Donbas as separate from Ukraine. However, Zelenskyy did say he was open to making concessions for the Russian language. On March 10th, Turkey serving as a mediator of peace between Ukraine and Russia hosted talks in Antalya. After a number of sessions, Zelenskyy agreed with many of the principles laid out by Russia as terms for peace, such as Ukraine not joining NATO. Much of the reason for Zelenskyy’s acquiescence on NATO was his disappointment with NATO’s response during the war and their refusal to provide Ukraine with fighter jets which, if they had been provided, would have changed the scope of the war because it would have allowed Ukraine to set up a no fly zone over the country. The talks in Turkey was the first real progress on peace terms arising between Ukraine and Russia. The plan that Russia

presented had 15 points along with a direct exchange involving Russian withdrawal from western parts of Ukraine for Ukraine's decision to refrain from joining NATO. While Ukraine would disembark from plans to join NATO, they still proposed setting up a security agreement with US, Russia, UK, France, Germany, and Turkey. Despite the progress, some remained suspicious of Russia, believing that Russia was only faking as part of a military strategy of surprise. There was intelligence circulating that this could have been the case, according to French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian. However, by March 20th, the peace talk progress continued as Russia continued to reiterate that Ukraine not join NATO and that Ukraine allow the Russian language to be protected in Ukraine. While NATO membership was a major flashpoint precipitating Russia's invasion on February 24, 2022, Russia was also adamant that Ukraine cede Crimea and the breakaway states in the Donbas region. However, Ukraine continued to present its own demands to Russia, which ultimately stalled peace talks, as Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov put it. Russia considered Ukraine's demands to be unacceptable as Ukraine did not want to show weakness or give off the impression of being subjugated. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres believed that no side could win the war and that peace talks to end the fighting was imperative. Subsequently, another round of talks were set to begin in Istanbul on March 28th, and Zelenskyy was prepared to announce to Russia that Ukraine would not join NATO. Other countries like Estonia remained skeptical, citing incidents in the past when Russia would conduct peace talks, make agreements, only to later violate the terms. In April, both the Chancellor of Austria and the UN Secretary General met with Putin in Russia and noted the vast difference of perspective between that of Ukraine and that of Russia. Russia's perspective of the invasion was completely different from that of Ukraine's, and this evoked pessimism that a peace deal, at least in the short term, could be achieved. In mid-May, President Putin met with representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Tajikistan, and Belarus to discuss measures required to deal with the possibility of NATO forces entering Ukraine and the impact that it would have on border security issues. Sweden and Finland had recently announced that they would join NATO, which led to Russia stopping all gas and oil exports to Finland and also pledging to deploy 12 Russian divisions to the Finland/Russia border. Later in May, the US attempted to get involved in the peace process through a partnership with Japan, while at the same time in provocation of China, pledging to support Taiwan militarily if China attempted to force Taiwan to join the mainland. This promise to Taiwan was incompatible with US resolve to continue to supply Ukraine with military aid, and likely further fostered mistrust of US foreign policy. After initially scoffing at Russia's attempt to get

Ukraine to the negotiating table, US officials began to insinuate that Ukraine may have to end the war at the negotiating table, or in other words cede territory to Russia and the Russia-backed separatists, a prospect that President Zelenskyy of Ukraine has continued to denounce.

However, if Ukraine does not cut its losses, they will stand to lose even more territory if they continue to push back. There are examples in history where territory unjustifiably seized only led to more territory being unjustifiably seized when the native inhabitants tried to push back. Two examples of this are North America and Palestine. Many in the political world, especially on the left leaning side of the spectrum, have come to a consensus that both the Palestinians in Israel and the Native Americans in North America were unfairly pushed out of their longstanding habitat. In both cases, the indignation regarding this had no impact on the tides leaning in favor of what would be considered a fair outcome. In both cases, when these groups attempted to seize what they felt belonged to them, they only lost more territory in the process and were left having to demand that the allocation just prior to their military move be restored. But at that point it was too late. They felt emboldened by indignation and took a gamble and lost. In the case of Israel, when the military attempt by Arab forces failed and Israeli forces were able to seize more land as a result, the Arabs tried to turn back the clock and demand that the allocation of Palestine/Israel go back to the pre-1967 arrangement. But now after having seen that the Arabs were discontent when that arrangement was previously in place, Israel has no way of trusting that militant forces would stop waging war against the Jewish state if the Jewish state hypothetically agrees to a settlement going back to the 1967 allocation of Palestine. Now in the case of Ukraine, Ukrainian officials want what was on the negotiating table prior to February of 2022, when the breakaway regions in the Donbas region were still recognized by Russia as a part of Ukraine. When that situation presented itself, there was no push by Ukraine to cut one's losses and simply acquiesce to Russia's demands concerning NATO. Ukraine remained defiant and now the same perspective of wanting to go back to an earlier settlement as applied by the Arabs in their respective territory, is being applied in the case of Ukraine and will, in similar fashion, only bring more and more of Ukraine further and further under Russian control. Much like Ukraine at the moment, both the Palestinians and the Native Americans had foreign backing, which compelled them to believe that they could stop the hegemony of the stronger occupying forces. In both cases, the foreign backing had no effect. They still lost territory.

In history, the only time Ukraine was able to carve out its territory amid Russian influence was when there was regime change in Russia. This occurred when the Russian empire collapsed during

the Bolshevik revolution, which allowed Ukraine to establish the central Rada and define its territorial borders. The same happened again after the Soviet Union fell, which once again allowed Ukraine to define its jurisdiction. But now, calling for regime change in the Russian Federation would have catastrophic consequences for Ukraine and would almost certainly lead to a repeat of history when Russia forcefully assumed command over all of Ukraine, much like they did during the time of the Russian empire and during the time of the Soviet Union. At the moment, while Ukraine has lost 20% of its territory, they still have much of its autonomy and can attest to successfully resisting a military force that the rest of the world was afraid of. That is a huge source of pride for Ukrainians. Another factor in Ukraine's favor at the moment is that the breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine are still not officially Russian Federation territory, although backed by Russian military. There is still a path to concordance with the separatists that could lead to reunification in the future if the separatist are open to Kyiv making concessions on the Russian language and also taking responsibility for the tragedy of Odessa when 48 ethnic Russians were killed in a fire at the Trade Union Building. It is still possible that the DPR and LPR could in the future become open to being a federalized part of Ukraine with internal autonomy.

The best course of action would be for Ukraine to evaluate what they currently have and assess whether any moves in the future would jeopardize their own autonomy as a nation or lead to further losses. Now that Russia has already invested Russian lives for the sustaining of Russian culture/language in eastern Ukraine, there isn't much Ukraine can leverage in negotiations at the moment. They could engage the leadership of the LPR and the DPR breakaway states and maybe seek an interconnected economic relationship with them in the hopes of a future open borders scenario or scenario where the breakaway states may agree to become a federalized part of Ukraine. Any plans to Ukrainianize that area of the country has to be taken off the table indefinitely.

If Ukraine continues fighting expecting to reclaim all of the former Ukrainian territories overnight, especially while assuming commitment from a historically unreliable ally in the United States, such could ultimately lead to the complete marginalization of Ukrainian people and a drastic reduction of what becomes Ukrainian territory. Continued fighting will lead to events in eastern Europe playing out much like events in Israel, when those nations that initially backed Palestinian resistance to Israeli hegemony ultimately conceded and accepted Israel's jurisdiction. Similarly as it pertains to eastern Europe, those nations which support Ukrainian resistance will ultimately demand Ukrainian capitulation when they become weary of war and bloodshed. France and the US are both now trying

to push Ukraine to the negotiating table, and many of Ukraine's closest allies will follow suit. And all that will be left for Ukraine is a hatred and resentment of anything Russian. This type of hatred, much as we see harbored by Palestinians against Israel, is a hatred that cannot even be described. Just the mere mention of Israeli evokes a profound level of vitriol not normally operating on earth and among men. Ukrainians are headed in that same direction if they continue to lose ground to the Russians and witness civilian casualties, family members being obliterated by constant shelling, all of which will coincide with continued resistance. When the hate reaches such a level, any and everything associated with the enemy considered an abomination, there is nothing the enemy can do to appease, other than cease to exist. This is why the international community must develop a plan of compensation to be operated concurrent with their plan to establish accountability. It is all too often the case, that nations which maintain a powerful military apparatus are able to conduct military operations that do not follow along with international regulations on warfare. In these cases, international criminal courts can only stand by and make symbolic gestures. A fund dedicated to reparations for victims of war crimes carried out by impregnable forces will help the healing process. In this regard, there is always recourse. In this case, the victim, if he has no recourse as far as lobbying for a criminal investigation, he can apply for some sort of financial compensation. During the conflict, Ukraine had been pressured into both ceding the breakaway regions to the separatists and ceding Crimea to Russia. Reports about Ukraine winning the war was to keep morale high, but now Ukrainian officials are admitting that the sheer size of the Russian army and the amount of equipment the Russians have is overwhelming them in the east. They subsequently demanded more artillery from the US, but some of the weapons sent are already being sold on the black market. The critical issue right now for Ukraine is orchestrating prisoner swaps and getting Ukrainians that have been deported to Russia back into Ukraine. The success of this will hinge on what Ukraine does with Viktor Medvedchuk, a close friend of Putin. Zelenskyy had offered to release Medvedchuk for Ukrainians held captive in Russia and separatist-held territories, but the Kremlin had refused the offer. Medvedchuk was a pro-Russian Ukrainian politician and a staunch ally of Putin for two decades, remaining loyal to him even after ethnic Russians voted to make Crimea a part of Russia and also after separatists seized control over Donetsk and Luhansk. According to Ukraine, both Putin and Medvedchuk have vacationed together and have close family ties. Putin is the godfather of Medvedchuk's daughter. While NATO expansion has been cited as the reason for Putin's invasion of Ukraine, some wonder whether or not Ukraine's treatment of Medvedchuk in the years leading up to the war was

another reason for Putin's antipathy towards Ukraine. Ukraine shut down Medvedchuk's media stations and also confiscated his personal assets, before charging him with treason. He served as the last link between a possible future relationship between Ukraine and Russia, and he was certainly the man that Russia wanted to be in power in Ukraine after the war would end. However, shortly after Russian forces moved into Ukraine, Medvedchuk went missing before appearing in Ukrainian custody. His capture provided Ukraine with leverage in negotiating prisoner swaps, and Zelenskyy made a proposition to Putin, saying he would "exchange this man of yours for our boys and our girls who are now in Russian captivity" But Russia refused the request and insisted that Medvedchuk had no special influence on Russia's politics or their geopolitical agenda.

Ukraine will have to use the prospect of recognizing both the autonomy of the breakaway states and also Crimea as part of Russia, in order to negotiate prisoner swaps and the return of Ukrainians held captive by Russia. This is a vital aspect of the war because any lack of care here can trigger a similar dynamic of which occurred between US forces and jihadists forces, where each side began abusing captives with impunity. US abuses at Guantanamo Bay have been heavily documented, and be-headings of American civilians captured by jihadists in Iraq have been aired on streaming media. This is where the international media has to conduct itself in a responsible manner that is willing to place pressure on both sides of the conflict to treat captives humanely. Both western and Russian media have to agree to stop using the word "mercenary" to describe foreign fighters. Double standards only protract tensions that impede diplomatic progress.

However when it comes to treatment of detainees, the US is in no position to lecture anyone. There is plenty of evidence that US armed forces personnel have carried out acts of torture against individuals that had been detained and held captive in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Such acts violated Article 1 of the Convention Against Torture. Many of the tortures conducted by US military personnel against detainees involved infliction of extreme pain for the sake of extracting information and carrying out punishment. In Iraq, at Abu Ghraib prison, some of the torture techniques used involved forcing detainees to maintain a stressful and painful physical position for a lengthy period of time. Many of them were stripped naked. Some were confined in darkness for long periods. Others were forced to wear women's clothing. It was also reported that detainees would in some cases be deprived of food, water and sleep. In some instances, detainees were forced to stay out in the sun in hot weather. There were physical and sexual assaults, where detainees would be forced to pose in a sexually explicit manner while being photographed. A number of detainees have died because

of these aforementioned tactics. The FBI also reported that US military personnel carried out severe abuse of civilian detainees at Abu Graihib prison. These abuses, according to an FBI memo, included physical assault and strangulation, as well as mock executions. At Guantanamo Bay, similar violations of human rights occurred against detainees there—hooding, exposure to extreme weather, forced to assume stressful physical positions, sexual assaults, and being forced to strip naked. To this day, none of the perpetrators of torture have faced any accountability.

The only way to prevent a repeat of this during the Ukraine/Russia war will depend on how the international community and media remains engaged on the conflict. US tortures against detainees were carried out during a time in which the media was swayed by a pro-American narrative that would never presume that the US was capable of committing such atrocities or war crimes. Such negligence on the part of the international community and US media certainly played a role in US military personnel believing they could get away with those acts. In order to avoid a repeat where Ukraine and Russia may feel they could operate in a similar manner without scrutiny, the international community must provide ample, but fair coverage of the detainee situation in Ukraine. This is the next crucial aspect of the war that should not be overlooked. The media must get involved in urging Ukraine and Russia to do whatever it can to secure the release of captives detained by the military forces. Both sides of the conflict have already suffered too many losses to give ground over to the enemy. However, the human situation should be prioritized alongside the territorial situation. Russia should be willing to make concessions on Crimea for the sake of the release of Russian captives and volunteers held by Ukrainian forces. While Ukraine make concessions on the breakaway regions in the Donbas in exchange for Russia and DPR/LPR forces returning Ukrainian captives to Ukraine. In the book Anthony's Treaty, it was proposed that in exchange for Ukraine allowing water into Crimea, Russia would allow Crimea to hold a referendum on which country it wants to remain a part of. This referendum would have been conducted every 10 years for 100 years. In this book "Russia's Komfort", Russia would offer to allow Crimea to hold referendums every 10 years for 100 years if Ukraine will release Russian detainees which include civilians, foreign fighters, Russian troops, as well as Mr. Medvedchuk. Ukraine, on the other hand, would offer to recognize the autonomy of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic only on the condition that Russia release all Ukrainian captives and allow them back into Ukraine. This includes civilians, Ukrainian Azov fighters, and foreign fighters such as the two Americans currently in Russia's custody, and the British fighters/Moroccan fighter sentenced to death in the Donetsk.

This deal would be facilitated by the World Economic Forum(WEF) whom would establish a cryptocurrency fund aimed at providing reparations directly to civilian victims of the war, both Ukrainian speakers and Russian-speakers in Ukraine. The requirement for securing this funding requires that victims or immediate relatives of victims sign a document in which they agree to not pursue charges of war crimes against those parties responsible for their injuries or deaths of family members.

This fund initiated by the World Economic Forum should seek to establish the cooperation of multiple nations. The new fund would serve alongside the ICC and serve as a fill in when victims of war crimes are not able to acquire justice due to the nature and size of the perpetrator. With such an arrangement, when victims of war crimes are not able to get justice, they can receive reparations instead. And because the funding is transferred directly from the fund to the victim, the victim is ensured to receive the aid. Cryptocurrency makes the transfer all the more easier.

The World Economic Forum is an international organization that focuses on bringing together the most prominent leaders of society to discuss solutions to global issues. It was formed in Geneva Switzerland in 1971 and has been instrumental in bringing the world into a more integrated framework in which solutions to problems at the global level can be addressed. The WEF prides itself on maintaining a strong moral capacity not swayed by any political agenda, and works to gather input from all walks of life, all nationalities, for the sake of making the world a place for positive change. In recent years, however, all of the WEF's progress in making the world more interconnected has been stifled by political unrest, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine, all of which is fragmenting and breaking the world apart. The residual effect of the war in Ukraine has impacted the economy at the global level, from rising energy prices and food shortages. Another issue of concern is nuclear weapons proliferation now that two nations, Libya and Ukraine, both of whom gave up their nuclear weapons in exchange for security guarantees, would end up having their territorial integrity violated by states that initially promised to respect their sovereignty on that basis. The WEF must re-integrate Russia back into the global community but only on the basis of a discussion that answers why larger powers are impervious to accountability, a precedent set by the actions of US forces in the middle east.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine violated the UN Charter, but both Russia and Ukraine going back to 2014, as documented by human rights groups, have committed war crimes and violated international human rights laws. Both the Ukrainian forces and Russian forces have deployed military into residential areas and launched artillery strikes from those areas and thereby endangered the civilian

population. Western-based human rights organizations documented this to be the case, but largely pointed out Russia as the main offender, while not having followed up on evidence that Ukrainian forces were endangering civilian lives. Both Ukrainian and Russian forces used cluster bombs during the conflict, violating a pact signed between multiple nations banning the use of such weapons. Artillery strikes damaged soft targets such as hospitals and schools. A theater sheltering hundreds of civilians in Mariupol was struck by Russian artillery. A Russian strike damaged the Zaphorizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Just a month into the conflict, over 1000 civilians were killed as a result of the fighting. Another 1600 were injured. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians were deported to Russia, and during the fighting, it was alleged that Russia was summarily executing innocent civilians and raping young women. Russia has also been accused of conducting torture sessions. Human rights organizations based in the west have not followed up on evidence implicating Ukrainian forces when it came to endangering Ukrainian civilians. It has been documented that Ukrainian forces were launching strikes from residential areas.

The ICC's Rome Statue was violated by both Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the US invasion of Iraq. According to the ICC, invasions and annexations are illegal. But Russia nor the US recognizes the ICC's jurisdiction. The court, however, as an ongoing investigation in Ukraine since 2013 regarding acts of genocide by any persons or party in the conflict. They have also been active in sending representatives to Ukraine to inspect sites of civilian casualties.

Shortly after the Russian invasion began in February, the UN Human Rights Council established a new committee to deal specifically with violations of humanitarian law in Ukraine during the war. UN Human Rights monitoring agency took note of unlawful detainment of journalists and politicians in Russian occupied areas. It was estimated that around 45 people working in the public sector had been arrested. The agency also documented reports of human rights violations of the part of Ukrainian forces. The UN human rights monitoring has been keeping tabs on violations since 2014. Ukraine reported to have evidence of 2500 war crimes committed by Russian forces along with the names of many of the suspects. During the war, one person from the Russian forces was brought to trial to face charges of killing an unarmed civilian.

Russia, prior to the invasion, considered Ukraine's blocking of water flow into Crimea a form of genocide. In lieu of that, Russia justified the invasion on that basis. However, Ukraine contested this by going to the International Court of Justice(ICJ) which forbids false allegation of genocide as a pretext for invasion. This is part of the Genocide Convention of 1948, an accordance which both Ukraine and Russia have signed onto. The ICJ ruled in March that Russia was in violation and ordered them to disengage from Ukraine.

The war in Ukraine has exposed double standards within the international community. If these double standards are not addressed within an international forum, the world will continue to become more polarized. Also, the international human rights community needs to define itself in terms of where it stands on justice and peace because in many cases the two are not compatible. The aims of many separatists groups and nations are not peaceful in any way shape or form because their demands to “right” a previous “wrong” require the loss of civilian lives. For this reason the entities like the World Economic Forum, NGOs, and the United Nations have to asses what its main goals are. If it is justice, then they should prepare to accept the reality that innocent lives will be lost in that process. If it is peace, then they must accept the reality that justice will be lost in the process. Should the international community choose the latter, then all war crimes investigations against both Ukraine and Russia's high ranking government officials, thanks in part to US impunity in the middle east, have to be dropped once a ceasefire is established. Then, every effort has to be taken to compensate the victims of the conflict in some other manner. Another important step is making sure every effort is being taken to secure the release of everyone held captive as a result of the war. This includes fighters, civilians and volunteers. Following this, a new convention needs to be established when it comes to the laws of war, one that will have something else in place when accountability cannot be established.

Volume IV: Power Vacuum (A final solution)

(written on September 11, 2022)

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Introduction

This book explains how Ukraine could take advantage of a power vacuum in eastern Ukraine between pro-Russian citizens there who are split between joining the Russian Federation and remaining autonomous. But now that the regions there have officially been annexed by Russia in early October of 2022, the idea of applying this strategy becomes untenable. But this does not discount the quality of the information in this book being directly related to the matter at hand. For example, it's explained how the establishment of a critical race theory could set the stage for the development of an identity for Russian speakers who do not identify as Russian. So the main thing that I want the reader to get out of this book is that it is perfectly rational to not presume that a nuclear war or world war III is the only way Ukraine can recapture its internationally recognized territories. At first, I will explain how certain dynamics in the west led up to the Russian invasion, but then I will articulate how Russia is facing a similar dynamic they faced during the first Chechen war and because of that, how they will likely have to withdraw their troops from much of eastern Ukraine within two years. And it will not be based solely on Ukrainian resistance, but also on the overall negative sentiment that the Russian public has on the Russian military excursion into Ukraine, making it to where that such in itself poses even more of an existential threat to the Russian Federation than say western powers like the US or NATO. Many are afraid of what could transpire from Ukraine continuing their effort to resist the Russian assault, especially in terms of the nuclear threat, but because of the connection between the circumstances surrounding the war in Ukraine and the 1994 Chechen war with Russia, one could easily predict that if Ukraine remains steadfast in resisting the Russian military invasion, at least until late 2023, internal unrest inside of Russia over this war will ultimately lead to a Ukrainian victory. Attempts by the Russian Federation to double down on their convictions to pummel Ukraine into submission could have catastrophic consequences for the Kremlin, that of which would arise from within Russian territories. There are certain factors that Russia has to honor. If they don't, they may face the same existential threat they faced inside of Russia during the time of the Russian empire and also during the time of the Soviet Union. Keep in mind that Russia's war with Japan in 1905 and later against Germany during World War I ultimately led to the overthrow of the Russian empire via an internal revolution. Many historians also suspect that Russia's 10 year occupation of Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989 sowed the seeds for the collapse of the Soviet Union. In all of these cases, the wars had a negative impact on Russian sentiment towards the government and also a negative impact on the Russian economy which further

triggered social unrest inside Russia. The Russian Federation faced a similar circumstance during their first war with Chechnya in 1994, where after invading Chechnya without a significant justification, Russia faced growing unrest inside Russia over losses mounting during the war, which forced the Kremlin to withdraw its troops from Chechnya in 1996 and thereby grant Chechnya a de facto independence. Keep in mind, Chechnya did not have the military backing that Ukraine has right now, and they were still able to fend off a full scale Russian invasion in 1996. Much like Chechnya, Ukraine also has a growing number of Islamic fighters coming into the country. In fact, some of the Muslim fighters helping Ukraine come from Chechnya. This is an important key because the Islamic element in Chechnya was largely responsible for Chechnya's 1996 victory over Russia, as the Sunni fighters were heavily experienced with many having fought against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989,. They also received a lot of funding from Arab countries. Moreover, there have been reports from Iran and eastern based media that Islamic fighters from ISIS and Al Qaeda are being sent to Ukraine to help with the resistance against Russian aggression. This would be a major game changer, due to the skills in guerrilla warfare, urban combat, airstrike and drone evasion that the Sunni extremists have attained from fighting against the US in the middle east for over 20 years. And all of this will be explained in this book.

Now one has to keep in mind the overall sentiment in Ukraine regarding this war. While the carnage of the war as shown on social media is upsetting to those in the west, those who live in Ukraine and have either been victimized by Russia's invasion or know someone who has been killed or tortured by Russian troops insist that Ukraine do all they can to get their land back. How many people in the USA would have been receptive to anti-war sentiments on September 12, 2001, after the US had just experienced one of the worst attacks on its soil? Back then, there was no one questioning the impact that a US war against Afghanistan would have on the civilian population. Well, this is what Ukraine is experiencing right now—a major attack on their soil and much like America right after 9/11, Ukrainians have the same indignation to respond to this tragedy, and in their case, by attaining justice for the civilian victims tortured and killed during the Bucha Massacre and other attacks around Ukraine. This can only be done by forcing the Russians out of Ukraine. But still and all, many in the west have this concern about being dragged into a world war scenario, over what is happening in Ukraine, and throughout the war there has been threats by Russia and NATO to use nuclear weapons against each other, which would lead to the complete annihilation of the whole world, leaving no more of anything to defend. The more we look at what would be required for Ukraine to take back Crimea and

the breakaway regions—essentially artillery strikes and bombings on the Crimean Bridge and the Izvaryne border crossing, we can only conclude that such attacks would be met with an ever harsher Russian response every time, perhaps escalating to the point of another world war or nuclear war. But there are other strategies that don't require Ukraine bringing the world into an escalated conflict. Because of the dynamic that Ukraine has working in its favor—that being not having carried out any precipitating attack on Russian soil, any strategy aimed to wear out the Russian occupation and reduce their morale would have a more profound effect on the outcome of the war. An example of what I mean is how the Ukrainian government is offering money to demoralized Russian soldiers who would surrender their heavy weapons to Ukraine. This is very astute on the part of Ukraine. If anything, a strategy for Ukraine to facilitate unrest within Russia as a primary objective, while they continue to put pressure on occupation troops will not only lower the chance for nuclear war, but raise the likelihood of regime change inside Russia and thus a Ukrainian victory. Now anyone who doesn't know about the first Chechen War will not believe that Ukraine could easily win back the annexed territories. Chechnya essentially followed a simple methodology of continued and sustained resistance which wore out Russia's resolve. For that war, there was no backdrop of a terror attack inside of Russia perpetrated by Chechens that would have mustered up public support for the Russian invasion of Chechnya in 1994. And for this reason, Russia was doomed to fail. The same can be said of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. There was no precipitating terror attack inside Russia carried out by Ukrainians that would have evoked public support for Russia's invasion, and therefore because of this, Russia's war in Ukraine—at least this first time around—is doomed to fail, that is if Ukraine remains resilient at least for the next two years. And by resilient, not meaning that Ukraine carry out artillery strikes that endanger civilians in eastern Ukraine, but meaning that Ukraine carry out enough of a sustained and continued attempt to recapture those territories. This would eventually facilitate more and more unrest inside of Russia over the war in Ukraine. Much like how many were calling for the removal of Boris Yeltsin over his ineptitude in directing the first Russian invasion of Chechnya, the same, in fact, has already happened to Vladimir Putin—as officials in 18 Russian districts have already called for his resignation over his failures in Ukraine. The bottom line is that the existential threat to the current Russian governing apparatus is within because clearly, especially when observing history, Russia cannot operate militarily independent of the public support of the Russian people. Such support is why Russia was able to win the second Chechen war, and the lack of it is why they lost the first Chechen War and why they will lose this first war against Ukraine. Yes, first war is what is exactly

meant, because a second war against Ukraine will likely be pursued by Russia if after a long stretch of relative of calm following a negotiated settlement—whether that be a full Russian withdrawal or partial Russian withdrawal, Ukrainian rogue militias decide to follow the same course of action as the Islamists in the northern Caucasus following the first Chechen War and carry out large scale attacks on Russian soil, killing scores of civilians. Then, in that case, Russia will be able to get the public support to completely use every means possible to destroy the entirety of Ukraine. But at the moment, Russia does not have that dynamic working in their favor, and such will prevent them from carrying out their goals there. And this is why Russia's attempt to evoke public support by annexing the regions of Ukraine, presuming that Ukrainian attacks on the now Russian territory would be seen by the Kremlin and Russian public alike as attacks against the Russian Federation, is likely to fail. Why? Because the war is ongoing and for much of the Russian public, it has yet to sink in that part of eastern and southern Ukraine is now fully Russian territory. Because it is not fully grasped in the psyche of the Russian public, attacks on those annexed regions by Ukrainian forces will still be perceived by the Russian public as Ukrainian attacks on Ukrainian territory, and thus not relevant to Russian security. Hence, the reason continued Ukrainian attempts to reclaim those territories will only produce the effect of exhaustion for the Russian public, not indignation as the Kremlin would hope. Russia's goal with the annexation was to get the Russian public to view Ukrainian attacks in eastern and southern Ukraine as directly related to Russia's security. In order for this to happen, however, a period of peace, for at least 3 years will be required for the annexations to sink into the Russian psyche, and thus for the Russian public to view Ukrainian attacks in the annexed regions as attacks on Russian soil.

In the later part of September of 2022, referendums were held in the occupied regions of eastern and southern Ukraine to decide on whether or not those areas would remain independent or become part of the Russian Federation. These referendums were considered to be forced at gunpoint and thus nothing more than a sham vote. North Korea, however, recognized the legitimacy of the referendums, making them the only nation at that time to do so. Four areas of eastern and southern Ukraine held the referendums—the Donetsk People's Republic, the Luhansk People's Republic, the Kherson region, as well as Zaporizhzhia where the largest nuclear power plant in Europe is located. The referendums were right on the heels of the start of a major Ukrainian counteroffensive, and all 4 regions are still marred by continued Ukrainian resistance and fighting. The international community has not recognized the referendums as legitimate and the UN has considered the referendums as violation of their charter. The result of the referendums were almost

unanimously in favor of the breakaway regions joining the Russian Federation, as announced by Russian president Vladimir Putin on September 30, 2022. Prior to this referendum, the DPR and LPR were adamant about remaining autonomous, not joining either Ukraine or the Russian Federation. During the separatist revolt back in 2014, pro-Russian militants had to take over administration buildings and police stations by force and amid considerable resistance from residents of eastern Ukraine whom did not want to separate from Ukraine. After doing so and triggering a Ukrainian response, the separatists left no other option for residents in that part of the country after essentially dragging them into a war that they did not want to be a part of. The separatists knew that their actions to evoke a Ukrainian government response would trigger self preservation among the Russian speaking inhabitants and over time lean them more towards Russia. As we see with the referendums in 2022, this plan ultimately worked as the residents overwhelmingly believed that the referendums would provide more security for them. Keep in mind that separatism is prevalent throughout the world and one of the initial strategies among them is to create chaos and trigger self-preservation among those they claim to represent. Political analysts documented that no more than 25% of the populations in the breakaway regions supported joining the Russian Federation. Actually, the number of people wanting to join the Russian Federation dropped in concert with the drop in hostilities between 2014 and 2021. When shelling between the Ukrainian government and the separatists were highest, more ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine wanted to join the Russian Federation. This percentage dropped as the shelling decreased over the years, and obviously based on that dynamic, its not surprising that the number of those in favor of the breakaway regions joining the Russian Federation would increase after the Russian invasion of Ukraine when the shelling would escalate exponentially. The separatists knew it would work out this way, hence why there was no incentive for them to maintain ceasefire agreements during the war in Donbas between 2014 and 2021.

Annexations were announced in Kherson and Zaporzhzhia as well. In Kherson Oblast, referendums were considered since March when the Russian forces quickly seized the region. During that time demonstrations in support of a referendum were met with counter-protests. Many of those who participated in the counter-demonstrations against any referendum that would make Kherson part of Russia were kidnapped and tortured, as documented by Oleg Baturin , whom had been one of the victims. The Russian forces in Kherson had decided to forego any referendums until Russia had complete control of the region. In August of 2022, they filed papers for a vote to take place. The decision to conduct referendums in occupied territories was met with dismay from Ukrainian President

Vlodymyr Zelenskyy, who would consider such to be something that makes any future peace negotiations with Russia untenable. Zelenskyy also warned that anyone participating in the referendums would be charged with collaboration and possibly face 12 years in prison in the event that Ukraine reclaim the annexed regions. Fortunately for Ukraine, the counteroffensive launched in September stifled Russia's attempt to conduct a referendum in Kharkiv. The results of the referendums held between September 23 and 27th of 2022 were nearly unanimous in favor of the occupied regions joining the Russian Federation. In the DPR and LPR, the results were 99% and 98% respectively in favor of joining Russia. In Kherson, 87% voted in favor of joining Russia. And in Zaporizhzhia, 93% were in favor of joining Russia. Russia's announcement of the referendum results were immediately followed by attacks. The first significant shortly thereafter was the bombing of the Nord Stream 2 underwater pipeline which was built to facilitate the flow of oil from Russia into Germany. Sweden launched an investigation and concluded that the attack was the result of sabotage. Russia was accused by the west of blowing up the pipeline, while many suspected that the United States or Poland had carried out the attack. This followed by another attack on the Crimean Bridge connecting Russia with annexed Crimea. The attack was strategic and would have cut off Russian reinforcements to Crimea via bridge, forcing them to bring in supplies via ferries or through other parts of eastern Ukraine. This attack by Ukraine was obviously congruent with their goal to reclaim annexed territory, and as covered in this book, Ukraine will likely have to attack the Izvaryne border crossing if they should attempt to reclaim Luhansk and Donetsk militarily since the Izvaryne border crossing is the Russian military's main entry into those breakaway regions. Without capturing or securing either the Izvaryne border crossing or the Crimean bridge, Ukraine will have a harder time recapturing the annexed regions. After the annexations, Russia announced that any attacks on the Russian occupied territories in Ukraine will be considered attacks on Russia itself. And after the destruction of Nord Stream 2 and part of the Crimean Bridge, Russia conducted a series of strikes all over Ukraine in early October of 2022, destroying power stations and military infrastructure as well as civilian areas. The attacks carried out struck as far as Lviv. In Kyiv, a pedestrian bridge was struck by Russian artillery, as well as some government buildings. Zelenskyy's office, however, had not been destroyed as previously presumed. The attack was carried out during rush-hour when the majority of people would have been out in public. The destruction of energy infrastructure left much of Ukraine without power for days. Some places were without access to food and water. Russia's strategy was to break the will of the Ukrainians. However, because the current conflict is on the heels of a preemptive invasion

of Ukraine in which there was no major attack on Russian soil by Ukrainian entities which would have justified an actual invasion, Russia will still have a hard time mustering up continued support of the Russian public. Hence, why the mobilization announcement led to a large exodus of Russian fighting age men from the country. Many decided to try and flee instead of go to war against Ukraine. This speaks to the low morale of Russians regarding the war in Ukraine which will only work in Ukraine's favor, much as it did for Chechnya back during the first Chechen war against Russia, where Chechnya gained a de facto independence. The only difference between Chechnya and Ukraine as far as Russian occupation goes is that Russia is occupying areas of Ukraine where the inhabitants there identify as Russian, a factor that will make their occupation of eastern Ukraine much easier than their occupation of Chechnya during the first Chechen war. This book, however, explains that Ukraine could overcome that hurdle with critical race theories which could help facilitate a Russian speaker in Ukraine gaining a new understanding of himself amid east Slavic ethnology.

Following the annexation of part of Ukraine in 2022 by Russia, the threat of nuclear war has ramped up, which has created a stronger urgency out west for the war to end as quickly as possible, not wanting to be dragged into a conflict in which they would face complete annihilation in a nuclear war. The US however has ruled out that possibility of peace, and Ukraine remains steadfast about gaining justice for victims of Russian aggression. We see that being the victim in a conflict warrants fighting for justice. Look at the US on September 12, 2001. No one in the country was anti-war on that day following the 9/11 terror attacks. Gaza and the West bank are another example. The Palestinians are in large part not seeking any peace with Israel until they get their lands back. This is the same sentiment in Kiev—where the average citizen has no desire to make peace with Russia. In all likelihood, much like the US was prepared to gain justice for the victims of 9/11 to the last American, and much like Palestinians are willing to fight for justice for bombings in Gaza to the last Palestinian, Ukraine follows suit—willing to fight to the last Ukrainian to seek justice for the victims of Russian atrocities. This book has tried to examine other ways to deter Russian aggression, way that might not have been thought of, such as counterfeiting rubles and applying critical race theories, which if successful would lessen the need for outside support to ensure a Ukrainian victory, and thus reduce the risk of nuclear war. If more and more people in occupied areas of Ukraine identify less and less as Russian, it opens the door for an internal guerrilla resistance against the Russian occupation which will compel Russia to withdraw, much like they had to do during the first Chechen war. However, the more Ukrainians in occupied areas identify as Russian, and the more shelling they

encounter from Ukrainian forces, the more likely that the chance of Ukraine reclaiming those territories ends up becoming contingent of western military support and an increased chance for nuclear war. After Russia launched a land, ground, and sea assault on Ukraine following the annexation, the US pledged to supply Ukraine with its anti-missile systems which would help Ukraine defend against incoming Russian artillery strikes. Ukraine, even without US anti-missile defense systems, managed to shoot down 54 of the 82 rockets fired by Russia in early October of 2022. With a supply of western made anti-missile defense systems, the accuracy would be even higher, which would save Ukrainian lives.

Many ask what a Ukrainian victory would look like and how would it transpire. The first thing we could expect is more unrest inside of Russia, such as more Russian officials in various districts calling for the Russian president to step down. Another circumstance would be repeated pleas by the Russian Federation to Ukraine for peace talks. Another scenario is the complete collapse of the Russian economy, which the book explains is possible with another element added to sanctions. The key circumstance that would nearly ensure that Ukraine regain their territories would be if pockets of insurgency arise inside the annexed territories and originate within the Russian speaking populations. This is only possible with critical race theories, but if this does come to be the case in the annexed territories, a Ukrainian victory would be very close. Then application of Anthony's Treaty would be very possible in that scenario.

Chapter 1: Power Vacuum

Taking advantage of the power vacuum that comes about when friction arises among various demographics is one of the oldest methods of attaining influence. The United States is known for applying this tactic in multiple countries. And so is Russia. This book will explain that Ukraine can also play this game to good effect if they wanted to and by doing so, they would be able to reclaim all of Ukraine, even the breakaway regions of the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. The reason this book takes this approach is because if a negotiated settlement was met with widespread condemnation in Kyiv prior to the Bucha massacre, any negotiated settlement afterwards—which doesn't involve the complete removal of Russian troops from Ukraine, as well as the return of the breakaway regions back into the control of Ukraine—would also be met with condemnation and possibly even more hostility that could lead to the ousting of President Zelenskyy, someone who is clearly a man of peace but now compelled to attain justice for the victims of the Bucha Massacre. The book Anthony's Treaty laid out a peace plan that could have led to Ukraine being given back all of its internationally recognized territory. The separatists would have plead guilty to terrorism and been exiled to Russia for 10 years, as well as paid a pension from the Russian government. Russia would have removed its troops from Ukraine and took responsibility for the violation of ceasefires during the 8 year civil war in Donbass. In exchange for Ukraine allowing water into Crimea, Russia would have allowed Crimea to hold referendums every 10 years for 100 years. Finally, eastern Ukraine would have been given 500 years to transition over to the Ukrainian language. Such a treaty is almost untenable now and in theory could only be implemented if Ukraine gains a significant military advantage over Russia as well as a deterrence mechanism to keep Russia from encroaching the country ever again. This book explains in detail how such is possible with other forms of warfare, one being taking advantage of the power vacuum, another being the use of both economic warfare and critical racial theories, both of which don't require resorting to the use of violent terrorism. It must be said, however, that violent terrorism has worked to some effect especially when it came to Chechnya's independence from Russia in 1996 and Algeria independence from France in 1960, but at the same time especially in the case Chechnya's second war with Russia, terrorism worked against them and led to Russian eventually annexing the entire country. The aforementioned non-violent tactics, however, may suit Zelenskyy's liberalism and his inclination to non-violence, with power vacuum exploitation being the most advantageous.

Russian operatives operating in the United States have possibly pulled off the greatest act of fomenting social unrest and division in the country of a major power, to the point that if Russia decided to invade the United States, at least 40% of those living in there would welcome them with open arms. Not only has Russia successfully carried out this task of helping to sow discord in the United States, they also did the same in eastern Ukraine, offering to aid the separatists if they could provoke unrest throughout the Donbass region and give Russia a justification to intervene and way of getting water and other supplies into Crimea. If we go back to 2016 in the United States, political and racial tensions were brewing throughout the country. Police brutality and the ethnic overtones that it was given gave rise to an ethnocentric movement that alienated other demographics in the country. While Russian operatives did not facilitate the rise of the various divisive movements in the country, they did help accentuate the division by supporting both sides of the social and political unrest. Russian operatives set up multiple fake accounts on social media encouraging support for the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. But they also set up accounts encouraging its opposition such as the Trump movement and the alt-right movement. Russian operatives were also involved in organizing protests on behalf of both sides of the discord. This mode of operation ultimately achieved its objective to divide the country and weaken it internally, and it quite possibly emboldened Russia to defy US threats aimed to deter Russia from invading Ukraine since Russia, in observation of the friction in the US, could assume that a large number of demographics in the US would actually support Russia in order to shirk their political opposition. One can say that the political climate in the US and the intensity of the discord there is why the Ukraine war has garnered so much coverage in the west. Because if we look at the war objectively, its not the first time that Russia has launched a full-scale invasion of one of its neighbors. Russia invaded Chechnya in 1994, and Georgia both in 1993 and 2008. And in both cases, there was no where near as much western outrage, coverage, or support on behalf on either Georgia or Chechnya. Hence, we can affirm that there is a politicized aspect applied to what is happening in Ukraine that ultimately drives the attention towards it. We can say that the division in America has worked for in favor of both Ukraine and Russia in some ways.

The western media in recent years has for the most part taken a contrarian stance to GOP politics in America, due to the election of Donald Trump in 2016. In an effort to alleviate embarrassment and distance themselves from the movement that Trump had surrounding him at that time, the media would often side against any perspective they felt was upheld by the conservative outlook. Likewise, in order to distance themselves from the left-leaning media, many of Trump's

supporters would automatically side with Russia presuming that such was standard *modus operandi* of getting in formation against the opposition. Hence, we see how Russia was able to achieve the effect they wanted. However, there is plenty of evidence that the GOP was not entirely pro-Russian since republican senators like Lindsey Graham and John McCain were instrumental in getting weapons sent to Ukraine in the first place. But, nonetheless, because of Russian influence in the 2016 elections, it was still heavily perceived that the GOP was pro-Russian and it came to be the case that many GOP supporters also had that same outlook and would thus support Russia because of this perception. It was also maintained that Russia only interfered in the 2016 elections in order to have Donald Trump elected, and because of this, despite evidence that Russia supported Trump's extremist opposition movements like BLM and Antifa, many would hastily presume that by distancing themselves from the GOP, while providing a platform for their extremist opposition groups like BLM and Antifa, they were also distancing themselves from Russia. This was not the case because the democrats, in providing a platform for extremists in other demographics outside of the white male republican demographic, were unwittingly also playing to Russia's hands because extremist elements in other demographics were indeed supported by Russian operatives. A number of ethnocentric groups in the United States have ties to the Russian Government. In fact the FBI recently raided a pro-black solidarity socialist group on suspicion of having ties with the Kremlin. Furthermore, another factor that led heightened GOP support for Russia was because Donald Trump, during his tenure, was open about his admiration of Russian President Putin. However, back in 2017 a perplexity arose, when President Trump approved sending lethal military aid to Ukraine in a move that didn't fit the Trump/pro-Russia narrative, western media agencies like Reuters condemned it. They published an article in 2017 disapproving of the decision to arm Ukraine. The commentary by Daniel DePetris was entitled "Why the U.S. shouldn't send arms to Ukraine." There were also many reports among western media that Ukraine had a neo-nazi problem. But after 2019, when the quid-pro-quo scandal occurred with Trump threatening to cut off lethal aid to Ukraine, the media shifted their stance on Ukraine in order to remain contrary to the GOP. Ultimately, the contrarianism would set the left-leaning media against Russia. But it's a huge misconception to believe that Russia was decidedly on the side of the GOP since there is evidence that Russia was playing both sides of the friction and supporting all extremist movements that could further divide the country. While the democrats presume that by upholding critical theories like Critical Race Theory is a way of distancing themselves from the Trump movement and Russia, in reality that also plays into the hands of Russia's goal of dividing and destabilizing the

country. Hence we can presume that Russia's interference in the 2016 election was not in support of any party. It was only in support of what would ignite the most division within the US, evident by the fact that after the election of Donald Trump, Russian operatives still remained active in their support of ethnocentric movements in the US opposed to the Republican party. One can easily surmise that Russian operatives are currently supporting the radical elements in every and any demographic and anyone doing the same to some extent is ultimately aligning themselves with Russia's goals of destabilizing the country whether they know it or not. It is quite possible that Russia has already achieved their goal since the trajectory of the US is leading towards a possible civil war. The power vacuum left from the division in the US leaves the door open for Russia to completely cripple the United States for good, which is something a civil war would do.

Russia was also instrumental in facilitating separatism in Ukraine, leaving a power vacuum that would lead to Russia eventually gaining control over 20% of eastern Ukraine. The power vacuum was such that Kyiv's opposition in eastern Ukraine ultimately begged Russia to come in and invade because in 2014 when Ukraine was on the verge of quickly defeating the separatists in the Donetsk People's Republic(DPR), those defeats suffered by the DPR compelled Igor Girkin, the then leader of separatists, to implore Russia for reinforcements. He argued that the defeat of the DPR would reflect badly on the Russian Federation, since it was President Vladimir Putin that named the republic "New Russia." Russia obliged and now because of that, Russia has gained control over 20% of Ukraine's territory. This book argues that in order to eliminate that power vacuum of Ukrainian speakers versus Russian speakers, Zelenskyy has to get as many people in Ukraine back to the middle and away from the extremes. Not only that, Zelenskyy will have to develop a critical race theory and conduct his own version of clandestine affairs in eastern Ukraine, but instead of fomenting separatism between Ukrainian speakers and Russian speakers, he would have to foment friction between those elements in eastern Ukraine who are against joining the Russian Federation and those who are for joining the Russian Federation. And in such a way that those who are on the side of autonomy will lean on the side of Kyiv and away from the Russian Federation. There are certain things that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is doing to work against the Kremlin and these things can be exploited by Zelenskyy to great effect.

The Central Intelligence Agency(CIA) of the United States has taken advantage of power vacuums in a number of countries throughout the years. Back in the 1950s, after the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran, the US eventually got involved in the political process there when Mohammad Mosaddegh was elected Prime

Minister. Back in the 1940s when oil was just getting to be known as a major resource in Iran, the US, UK, and Soviet Union all made attempts to exploit the oil rich nation. The Anglo-Iranian oil company was formed, but many of the royalties were being withheld from Iran while England was reaping most of the profits. Just prior to Mohammad Mosaddegh becoming Iran's Prime Minister in 1952, he helped to create legislation that would allow Iran to nationalize the Anglo-Iranian oil company, and after he became Prime Minister, the international community refused to buy oil from the now nationalized Anglo-Iranian oil company. Many feared that Mohammad Mosaddegh was a communist. Because Iran had been constitutional monarchy since 1944 with the Shah as the head of it, the US took advantage of the power vacuum that arose from the rift between the Shah and the Prime Minister of Iran over the powers concerning both positions. The CIA had been supporting all of Mosaddegh's political opposition, but later engaged the Shah with bribes and persuaded him to orchestrate a coup against Mosaddegh and have him removed from power. This coup was carried out in 1953, which led to General Fazlollah Zahedi being installed to replace him. Later that same decade and into the next, the US used economic warfare in Cuba to turn the people against the Castro government. Fidel Castro had come to power in 1958 after ousting the US backed leader General Fulgencio Batista during the Cuban Revolution. After Fidel came to power and then nationalized a US-Cuban oil company, the US employed numerous tactics to overthrow his government, using assassination plots and preventing Cuba from exporting and importing certain goods. Later on when John F Kennedy became president of the United States, all of Cuba's exports were embargoed and that embargo still holds to this day. Later on in the 1990s in Iraq, the US attempted to persuade the Saddam Hussein's Shia opposition and Kurdish minorities to overthrow his government. This is led to a brutal crackdown by Saddam's government and a refusal of the US to help the Shia and Kurdish militias they encouraged to rebel. The Shia uprising was a complete failure and many of them were slaughtered by Saddam's forces. The Kurds on the other hand were still at least able to establish autonomy for themselves in northern Iraq.

There has been much conjecture about the role that the US played in helping to encourage unrest in Ukraine. While Russia had been trying to bring Ukraine back into its sphere of influence since the early 2000s when Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma had begun to encounter significant disapproval over corruption scandals, the United States had become concerned about Russia's ability to hamper the US's military goals in the middle east, particularly in regards to Syria and Iran, two nations that are staunch allies of the Russian Federation. The US has always been concerned about Iran since the 1979 Iranian revolution when Iran's anti-western mantra of "Death to

Israel, Death to the United States” became regularly repeated. The US had such heightened concern about Iran that back in the early 90s, the US made sure to hope that their requests for the overthrow of Saddam in Iraq would only do enough to weaken Iraq to the point where Iraq would no longer be a threat to the US, but still able to keep Iran in check. Iran had been threatening to develop nuclear weapons and because of their policy against the US, the west is concerned about what Iran might do if they are able to develop them. Iran has centrifuge technology that would allow them to enrich Uranium at record speed should they seek to develop a nuclear weapon. In lieu of this prospect, the US would simply invade the country if they could and install a different leadership, but since the US is aware that Russia will almost certainly come to Iran’s aid, diplomacy becomes the only option to pursue. Russia is also a major supplier of heavy weapons to Iran, providing to them air defense systems that could provide heavy resistance to a potential US invasion. But this is not only aspect that triggered a US strategy against Iran. Iran, in fact, took advantage of the power vacuum that came about in Iraq after the US invaded Iraq in 2003. The power vacuum that arose came from large segments of the Iraqi Shiite population that did not want foreign troops on their soil, irrespective of whether or not those troops were there to help them. For many Shias in Iraq, it did not matter that the US was there to overthrow the Sunni government and replace it with a Shiite majority. For them, the atrocity was having foreign troops on their soil. This left an opening in Iraq that Iran could exploit. This new demographic of Shias against US occupation was perfectly suited to Iran’s geopolitics and hence it would lead to Iran backing the Shiite-faction of the Iraq insurgency against US forces in 2005. With Iran having such close ties to Russia, the US could not simply strike Iran in order to deter them from aiding the insurgency. The next best option was to find ways to distract Russia from what is happening in the middle east, hence the Bush administration announced in 2008 that Ukraine and Georgia could be admitted into NATO. This helped trigger Russia’s full scale invasion of Georgia, which didn’t last long enough to keep Russia occupied in eastern Europe as opposed to the middle east. Thus Iran was able to continue supporting its proxies in Iraq in attacking US bases there without worry of the US launching a military intervention inside Iran. Meanwhile starting around the time of the Iraq insurgency, Syria after initially helping the US in the war on terror had begun providing safe passage to Al Qaeda militants seeking to get into Iraq to join the resistance movements. Syria was also allowing the Iran to use its territory to set up bases and ship weapons to its proxies in Yemen, Lebanon, and the Gaza strip. The US later saw an opportunity to overthrow Syria’s Assad regime in 2011 during the Arab Spring when protests were often met with lethal force from Assad’s police force. This created a power vacuum and gave the

US the justification to side with the violent separatists and help foment a civil war in the country. However, this led to Russian intervention in Syria in 2015, which prevented the US from carrying out its goal of removing Assad from power. It is certain that Russia's subversive behavior towards US hegemonic policy in the middle east is what drove the US to send heavy weapons to Ukraine in 2017, figuring that it would force Russia to remain focused on issues in eastern Europe. Now with Russia tied up in Ukraine, Russia was left no option but to withdraw from Syria. This opened the door for the US to assert more influence in the region since the value of the US dollar is tied to the security of its allies in the middle east. However, this book explains that a sudden US abandonment of Ukraine could have geopolitical implications that would affect US standing in the middle east as a trustworthy ally, which would in turn threaten the value of the US dollar. Zelenskyy can in fact take advantage of this to ensure even more supplies to his country. Moreover, when it comes to US helping orchestrate a coup in Ukraine, there some misconception regarding the players involved, and it is widely presumed in conservative circles that the democrats were instrumental, but looking back it was a largely bi-partisan effort that was led by republicans. Back in 2013, US republican Senator John McCain traveled to Ukraine to help support the anti-government protesters in Kyiv, a month after police began to use violence to quell the protests. Once again a power vacuum arose that made it very easy for the US to step into Ukrainian affairs. During that time, McCain expressed his concern that Russia was attempting to stifle freedom and democracy and that Ukraine should distance themselves from Moscow. The unrest created a window of opportunity for the US to side with the anti-government groups in Ukraine, not just to steer them away from Moscow, but also to lean them in favor of the United States. Later it was revealed that Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland, in a phone conversation with US Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffery Pyatt, had endorsed Arseniy Yatsenyuk as the best candidate to become Prime Minister of Ukraine in the new government, and she had also expressed a desire to keep the EU out of Ukraine's political affairs. Yatsenyuk was part of the opposition that stood against Yanukovych. But because the agreement to allow then Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych to remain president until the next elections did not fall thru—with the outcome instead being Yanukovych getting ousted, some political circles in the west presumed that this was a US backed coup and because it happened during the Obama/Biden Administration, many presumed that it was largely partisan and led by democrats, but its clear that both sides were looking to gain an edge in Ukraine—at that time the democrats politically and the republicans militarily. In fact, back in 2012 during that time it was republican Senator Mitt Romney warning

the democrats about the threat Russia posed to the United States. In 2013 and 2015, John McCain was criticizing the democrats about their lack of military support for Ukraine against Russian aggression. In 2017, it was republican President Donald Trump that agreed to send heavy weapons to Ukraine and republican senators Lindsey Graham and John McCain had actually traveled to Ukraine a year before to reassure Ukrainian forces that the US will provide them with the weapons that they needed to defend themselves against Russian aggression. In retrospect, after the ousting of Viktor Yanukovich, Russia would end up accusing the US of orchestrating regime change in Ukraine. Regardless, the heightened division in Ukraine allowed both Russia and the US to take advantage of the power vacuum. Russia subsequently annexed Crimea and instigated a civil war in the Donbass region in 2014 and left Ukraine in a bloody fratricidal 8 year civil war before invading the country in 2022 and carrying out numerous war crimes. This book presents the idea that while both Russia and the United States can play this game of taking advantage of power vacuums in order to steer the politics and military in their favor, President Zelenskyy of Ukraine will have the opportunity to do so as well and possibly bring Ukraine back into Kyiv's sphere of influence.

Chapter 2: Russian Invasion of Ukraine

Russia decided to invade Ukraine on similar false pretenses used by the US as justification to invade Iraq—the prospect of a smaller country attaining high-powered weapons that could be used offensively against the larger country. Just prior to the Russian invasion, Ukraine posed no threat to the Russian Federation, and not only that, there was no precipitating event, such as a major terrorist attack inside of Russia, that would have warranted Russia's full scale invasion of the country. This is why geopolitical policies of Russia and the United States has forced the world to examine both how the laws of war are applied, and also how other countries might have to prepare for a future possible unjustified attack from the great powers of the world such as Russia, the United States or China. Ukraine has put up a valiant fight against the Russian invasion into their country, and is attempting to launch a counteroffensive in the Kherson region before the winter sets in. While many Ukrainian officials are concerned about what the winter will bring as far as how it will impact strategy, Zelenskyy has nonetheless vowed to continue fighting against Russian forces amid fears from Ukrainian officials that during the winter, Russia could target Ukraine's thermal infrastructure and prevent them from being able to provide adequate heat to much of the population. This would lead to emigration and another refugee crisis as more Ukrainians would leave the country seeking adequate winter shelter. Ukraine will look to end its active phase of the war before winter starts, but if Zelenskyy insists on further resistance, another strategy could be applied, one that involves other ways to resist aggression that don't involve firing artillery. Other tactics will have to be explored because the winter brings about many challenges on the battlefield. NATO has warned about this and is lobbying to get more winter uniforms to Ukraine, as well as generators that would provide heat to soldiers and prevent soldiers from dying in freezing conditions. If Ukraine is able to have more winter gear, while Russia encounters a shortage, it could translate to a greater advantage for Ukraine during the winter months. Working around the limitations of the winter will require innovation and oftentimes the smaller country is better at applying resourcefulness in emergency situation. The challenge of winter, as well as the gas shortages in Europe will challenge Europe's continued support for Ukraine, and this is something that Ukraine will have to remain vigilant about. Also, there could be less mobility in the winter, with troops spending even more time holed up in bunkers, taking refuge from artillery strikes, as opposed to conducting high speed advances into enemy territories. Because Ukraine and Russia are no strangers to cold winters, it is likely that they will both find a way to operate in such conditions. However, the war could end up in a

stalemate in the winter since the freezing weather favors the defenders. Areas consolidated by Russian forces will be easy for them to defend. Likewise areas consolidated by Ukrainian forces will be easier for them to hold. It is much easier for a soldier to find shelter in the winter than it is for him to travel and advance or move into enemy territory. Snow and mud ultimately impede the movements of soldiers and vehicles. These factors are why Ukraine has set a goal of recapturing Kherson before the start of winter because if they secure it before that time, they will have an easier time defending it during the winter, which will give them a strategic advantage of possibly reclaiming other territories in the east of Ukraine. On the other hand, the winter factor also works in favor of Russia, allowing them to forecast that Ukraine will not make any more major advances during the winter. This aspect allows Russia to ramp up production of arms, and Russia is already buying arms from North Korea and Iran in an attempt to bolster their supplies in time for the spring and summer of 2023.

The full scale Russian invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, 2022, and after Russia advanced into Kyiv in early March of 2022, capturing Bucha, Hostomel, Vorzel, and Irpin, the Ukrainian forces fought back against a Russian assault that had been stalled by logistical problems, morale issues among Russian soldiers (many of whom were defecting to the Ukrainian side), as well as their own underestimation of heavy artillery manned by Ukrainian soldiers. The west, while largely negligent of Ukraine's need for air support, managed to provide the Ukrainian forces with high-tech weapons, which proved vital during the Ukrainian assault to repel the Russian military. Tactical blunders, as well as inadequacy in urban combat, would compel Russian forces to indiscriminately shell Ukrainian cities. Ukraine, however, began to push back against the Russian advance on March 25th, 2022 and was able to recapture various parts of eastern and western Kyiv. By the end of the month, Russian forces began to retreat, but would leave mass destruction in their wake, particularly in the town of Bucha, where close to 1000 civilians were found mutilated and tortured by Russian soldiers. By April 1st, the Ukrainian army reclaimed all of Kyiv. In retrospect, Russia was not prepared for urban warfare, which is why they used Chechen fighters in Bucha, hoping that their experience in fighting against Russia in the 1990s in urban combat scenarios would prove applicable against Ukraine in Kyiv. However, many of those skilled Chechen fighters traveled to Ukraine to help the Ukrainians defend their territory. The Chechens are known for their brutal tactics and in the mid-90s were able to retain their independence after Russia invaded Chechnya in 1994. The Chechens combined terrorism with highly skilled urban and guerrilla warfare to establish de facto independence from Russia in 1996. As we see in many cases, the only winning strategy that a

smaller number of militants can apply against an incoming larger military force is to resort to surprise attacks and ambushes by hiding in places where they would least be expected. Unfortunately, the only way to achieve such is by hiding behind soft targets i.e. schools, hospitals, libraries, and then launching ambush attacks from those positions, which only compromises the safety of civilians in the area, but is often times the only means of self-defense against an enemy that one does not know in advance would be beyond using unscrupulous tactics and terrorist actions. It certainly worked for Chechnya back in the mid-90s. Fast forward to 2022, we see that Ukraine had no way of knowing if the incoming Russian force was indeed attempting to carry out a genocide, which in that case would warrant Ukrainian soldiers getting in place in civilian areas for the sake of protecting civilians who would be in imminent danger. However, the Geneva Convention forces both sides of the conflict to assume that the invading force is not intending to carry out civilian executions and because of that, if one ascribes to the Geneva Convention, the defending nation has to not only allow the invader to enter unopposed but also trust that the invader will have goodwill towards the non-combatants while the defending nation's military leaves the civilian areas unprotected as they go and set up out in the fields far from residential areas. The non-combatants have to also avoid engaging in hostilities in order to retain their civilian status. So basically, in order to be protected by the Geneva Convention, civilians are prohibited from engaging in self-defense. If they do, they immediately become combatants and are fair game for enemy soldiers. Armies without question take advantage of this loophole, which is a reason why the laws of war have to be reexamined, because at the moment, it favors the more powerful aggressor nation. If we look at some of the old human rights reports, there are plenty of occasions in which military forces would fire artillery into residential areas of which there was no military personnel or military equipment in the area. This is why it becomes imperative for human rights organizations to review how the laws of war are applied. There is so much nuance that has to be addressed and a review of all these factors require a large degree of delineation. Zelenskyy, because he could only presume the worst—that Russia was indeed going to Kyiv to carry out a genocide against Ukrainians, he decided to make it legal for all Ukrainian citizens to take up arms and hostilities against the Russian forces.

After the atrocities they carried out in Bucha, Russia would meanwhile stage a second assault in other regions of Ukraine, particularly in the east and the south, where Russian forces were already gaining ground against the Ukrainian resistance, thanks largely to Russia gaining access to a map of the mine fields, possibly delivered to them by a traitor within Ukraine's ranks. This is heavily

owed to how quickly the Russian were able to seize Kherson in just a matter of hours. They then completely surrounded Mariupol by March 18th before entering the city center on March 24th. Much of the water and food supply had been cut off and those civilians who remained stuck there had to wait on negotiations for implementing civilian evacuation corridors, which were often impeded by Russian shelling along evacuation routes. Russia also upscaled their attacks on Odessa, Mykolaiv, and the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in early April. Russia's early gains can be traced back to their seizure of Kherson which made it easy for them to make gains in those other areas. The Russian forces continued to fight in Kharkiv, shelling Ukrainian positions. Kharkiv is less than 22 miles from the Russian border. When Russian forces mobilized reinforcements to enter the towns of Izium, Sloviansk, and Kramatorsk, Ukraine ordered that Ukrainian-speakers living near eastern Ukraine evacuate towards the western parts of the country. Much of this was owed to a delay in arms shipments to the eastern parts of Ukraine, shipments which had been promised to Ukraine by the west. Proximity to supply lines of arms shipments was also a factor in the delay. At the beginning of the war, Ukraine's close proximity to supply lines at the Polish border played a critical role in Ukraine being able to resist the initial Russian advance into Kyiv, but in the east, Ukrainian forces were further away from those lines, which made it harder to access incoming weapons provided by the west. Thus naturally Russia would have an advantage in the east, considering the fact that Russian forces in that part of the country are in closer proximity to their supply lines of weapons and aid coming from the Russian Federation. Russia was aware of this and subsequently consolidated all of its military personnel in southeastern Ukraine under the single command of Aleksandr Dvornikov.

In Bucha, after the Russian troops fled Kyiv, it had been discovered that war crimes had taken place there. Photo evidence showed scores of dead Ukrainian civilians that had been lined up and shot in the back of the head, execution style. This set the tone for the active phase of the war, during which Ukraine would later retaliate often with vicious tactics. It was reported by Ukrainian newspaper, The Kyiv Independent, that Russian troops killed a number of civilians in Bucha, and human rights organizations confirmed this. The victims included people simply transporting food, or families trying to escape the fighting. On March 5th, Russian troops fired upon 2 vehicles, one of which included a mother and her two children. Bucha Mayor, Anatoliy Fedoruk, reported to various journalists covering the war that war crimes had occurred in Bucha prior to the Russian retreat. He told the Associated Press that during the fighting the volunteers could not even gather the dead for burial because of the endless shelling by Russian forces. Not to mention, dogs were

feeding on the human cadavers that laid in the streets. Many in the international community, in solidarity with Mayor Fedoruk, stated emphatically that Russia was guilty of war crimes. The mayor would also compare the massacres in Bucha to the atrocities committed by the Nazis during WWII. Ironie, considering the fact that Russian troops were telling residents in Bucha that they were there to save them from Nazis. Furthermore, evidence of the tragedy came in the form of videos posted on social media, and the mayor had also noted that among the dead in Bucha, were a number of Russian soldiers—hundreds in fact. Ukrainian soldiers reported finding mutilated bodies comprising of men, women, and children in a basement at a summer camp that was used by the Russian forces as a torture chamber. Some of the acts of torture against Ukrainian civilians involved slicing off ears and pulling out teeth. The Ukrainian newspaper, *The Kyiv Independent*, posted a photo of a man and three naked women under a blanket whom Russian troops attempted to incinerate before retreating from Bucha. It was confirmed by Ukrainian officials that the women were raped and killed, while the men who were murdered in Bucha were killed execution style as many of the dead Ukrainian men were found with their hands tied behind their backs. A large portion of these victims were going about their day—there were many shopping bags alongside the bodies. In one photo, a man was lifeless next to what appeared to be his bike. It was often the case that many of the dead bodies had civilian clothing, making it all the more likely that civilians in Bucha were targeted for execution. Various news outlets like CNN and BBC aired footage of the scores of dead bodies that lay in the streets, many of which were bounded with legs and arms tied. Some had been shot at point blank range and others were crushed via being run over by tanks. Charred corpses were seen by a playground with evidence of being executed prior to being burned. The style of execution varied from torture to be-headings, to mutilation and incineration. A number of the bodies had also been booby trapped. Many of the residents of Bucha described how drunken Russian soldiers were conducting grave acts of terror and sadism against Ukrainian civilians. When forensics arrived in Bucha, they began the process of excavating those dead bodies buried in mass graves—one of those graves was near the St. Andrew the Apostle church. Meanwhile, Ukraine was advised to corroborate with the International Criminal Court and gather evidence that would implicate the Russian state of war crimes. Subsequently, it had been discovered that the Russian army was using flechette rounds to maim Ukrainian civilians. Such a mode of offense was considered a violation of humanitarian law. Many residents, who had taken refuge in basements in fear of the Russian presence, confirmed that the dead civilians in Bucha had been murdered by Russian troops. The residents who sought refuge inside their homes

were without basic amenities like electricity and had to make use of candles in order to generate heat for boiling water and for cooking meals. They finally appeared in public when Russian troops had evacuated the town, and some first-hand accounts of the massacre cited by news outlets revealed that Russian troops had been taking nearby civilians and using them as basically cannon fodder against the Ukrainian soldiers. One person who was part of a group of Ukrainians executed by Russian soldiers survived by playing dead after being grazed by the executioner's bullet. His group had been caught at a checkpoint and taken captive by Russian troops. They were all tortured, but he was the only one to survive the execution. He later arose and sought refuge at a nearby residence. Many of the Bucha residents describing how the Russian occupation panned out explained to Human Rights Watch that Russian soldiers were going door to door, interrogating residents, and taking from them, their clothing, jewelry, and other items that they would find useful. The Russian soldiers were also commanding residents to return to their homes, even as resources such as water and food were becoming scarce. The Russia troops continued their assault on the infrastructure of the town. Russian armored vehicles were also firing indiscriminately at buildings, while denying first aid to survivors of the shelling. The residents also explained how Russian troops began digging mass graves for victims of the conflict and for those executed by Russian soldiers. Summary executions were confirmed to have taken place by the Human Rights Watch organization. The New York Times called the massacre at Bucha a "campaign of terror", and noted that Russian soldiers were killing unsuspecting civilians in cold blood, and raping women—some of whom were held captive in a basement and later impregnated as a result of repeated sexual abuse. One resident in Kyiv who witnessed the Bucha occupation by Russian troops and who was present at the headquarters for the Ukrainian defense force when it was raided by Russian military personnel said that the Russians scoured through documents looking for the names of people who participated in the war in Donbass, before targeting them for execution. He then explained how Russian soldiers specifically sought and executed people who were donning tattoos symbolic of far right and Neo-nazi groups, as well as people who had tattoos that were officially associated with Ukraine. He also told journalists that Chechen fighters were killing people indiscriminately. Later, it had come to the attention of the media that Russian soldiers were seizing cell phones of Ukrainian residents and observing content to see if they held anti-Russian views. When this turned out to be the case, Russian soldiers would either arrest the person or execute them. According to many of the eyewitness accounts, the massacres could be summed up as indiscriminate killings by Russian soldiers against non-combatant Ukrainian civilians, killings that had no

justification. One Russian soldier was overheard bragging of his marksmanship, boasting about how he shot two Ukrainians inside their apartment by firing through the windows. When it came to rapes, there were roughly 25 girls and women who were raped by Russian soldiers, according to Lyudmyla Denisova, Ukraine's human rights commissioner. As the Russian state denied the allegations of war crimes and insisted that the massacres were staged by Ukrainian forces, satellite imagery showed—before the Russian retreat from Bucha—what appeared to be humans dead in the same places that the Ukrainian forces reported seeing them after they reclaimed the town in early April. It was confirmed that the killings took place when the Russians occupied Bucha. Both the New York Times and the BBC agreed with the assessment. The images also showed on March 10th what appeared to be mass graves dug out near a church. Many of the satellite images were verified by drone and video footage that showed Russian troops shooting a civilian walking with a bike. The person turned out to be the same person, shown in another video, laying dead with civilian clothing near a bike. More video evidence gathered showed Russian paratroopers forcing civilians to lay on the ground, while drone footage later showed dead bodies in the exact same spot. These videos were released by the New York Times on May 19th. Mayor Fedoruk confirmed that most of the executions by Russian forces against Ukrainian civilians took place in the Bucha areas of Yablonska, Sklozavodska and Lisova, and that 280 people from Bucha had to be interred in mass graves. The surviving residents of the city were left having to bury 57 other dead Ukrainian civilians, while coroners gathered 100 more dead bodies. Because there was no electricity, the morgue could not accommodate the dead and preserve the bodies via refrigeration, which left the coroners having to pay landscape workers to dig out a mass grave for the victims. The mayor estimated that the number of people killed in the massacre were somewhere in the range of 300, while the deputy mayor, Taras Shapravskiy, estimated that roughly 50 of those 300 were killed execution style. As of April 12, the number killed in the Bucha massacre was said to be around 400. The BBC news later raised the death toll to 500, and then to more than 1000 by May 16th, estimating that 650 of the +1000 were killed directly by Russian soldiers. The 64th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade was identified as the primary occupiers of Bucha during the Russian invasion. They are an infantry brigade connected to the Eastern Military District's 35th Army. Also identified as part of the Russian occupation of Bucha were Chechen Units from the Special Rapid Response Force and the OMON. These military personnel present in Bucha during the massacres were identified by Ukrainian intel. Subsequently, the name of the Russian soldiers were released by Ukrainian media, which was something considered a top priority by those parties seeking to indict the

perpetrators of the massacres for war crimes. In addition, German Intel sources were able to intercept radio transmissions of Russian soldiers, and found that the Wagner Group participated in the orchestration of the massacres. It was clear from the evidence that the Russian soldiers considered the operation of mass killings there business as usual or standard *modus operandi*. Meanwhile, the National Police of Ukraine convened an investigation into the atrocities that occurred in Bucha, and approached the situation much like a typical crime scene. This ran concurrent with requests from the Foreign Ministry of Ukraine to have the International Criminal Court and other international organizations investigate what happened in Bucha and other parts of Kyiv. Russia, on the other hand, sought to initiate a special conference of the UN Security Council to allege that the gruesome aftermath of the Russian withdrawal from Bucha was staged by Ukrainian radicals for the sake of provocation. Russia ordered their own investigation, suspecting Ukraine of pushing false information. But Amnesty International, a highly impartial human rights organization, confirmed that Russia committed war crimes in Bucha. Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Dmytro Kuleba, compared Russia to ISIS, stating that Russia even was worse than the Islamic terrorist group. He also proposed that G7 nations implement harsh financial restrictions on Russia. Kyiv Mayor, Vitali Klitschko, called the massacre a genocide of the Ukrainian people with Vladimir Putin directly responsible. President Zelenskyy arrived in Bucha on April 4th and spoke at the UN Security Council the next day, calling for Russia to be removed from the Council if they refuse to face consequences. He stated that Russia found pleasure in the deliberate killing of civilians, and he also urged the international community to hold Russia accountable for what transpired in Bucha. The Bucha massacre would have a major impact on President Zelesnkyy and his worldview of Russia and Russians in general. The atrocities were also condemned by the EU Council. Its president, Charles Michel, promised Ukraine that the EU would do everything in their power to implicate Russia for the crimes committed. NATO and the UN were, as well, appalled upon hearing about what happened in Bucha. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the UN, spoke on behalf of the UN, calling for an investigation that would certainly lead to those responsible having to face a war crimes tribunal. The US called for Russia to be suspended from the Human Rights Council, which led to an emergency special session of the UN General Assembly. There, it was voted that Russia be removed from the Council. However, 24 nations voted against the proposal, while 58 abstained. Libya in 2011 was the only other nation to be removed from the Council. Other European organizations like the European Commission condemned the massacres in Bucha and formally allowed Ukraine to begin an expedited process of joining the European Union(EU). Estonia

condemned Russia, and compared the Bucha massacre to the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis and the Soviet Union, and encouraged investigations and criminal proceeding against the orchestrators of the atrocity. The Prime Minister of Slovakia said that what occurred in Bucha was reminiscent of what happened during the Yugoslavia war. What occurred in Bucha set the tone for the rest of the war, and it was clear from Ukrainian resistance in the west that Russia will not have the capability of conquering all of Ukraine. In fact it is clear that the territories west of the Dnieper river pose logistical issues for the Russian military and because of this, Russia will ultimately pull out of many of the territories it seized in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine's arsenal of HIMARS rocket systems creates a very strategic problem for Russia's ability to consolidate more territory towards the west of Ukraine beyond the Dnieper river. There is also another factor. The dynamics that shaped the war in Ukraine has similarities to the Russian war in Georgia in 2008 and because of this, reports of Russia possibly using a nuclear weapon in order to appear strong may be blown out of proportion. Remember, back in 2008, Russia launched a full scale invasion of Georgia, backing the separatists in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. However, shortly thereafter, Russia withdrew their troops from areas of Georgia seized during the invasion, while keeping its troops stationed in the separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In retrospect, tensions in Georgia began after Georgia claimed its independence after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. However, Russia wanted to keep Georgia within its sphere of influence and decided to support separatist movements in the Georgian territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in order to subvert Georgian independence. After the civil war in the early 90s, the separatist regions in Georgia remained autonomous amid a long stalemate and there were many attempts by the Georgian government throughout the later 90s and early 2000s to reintegrate them back into the Georgian control; Georgia even installed its own pro-Georgian leadership in South Ossetia. However, it was never recognized by Russia and was also heavily resisted by the separatists. Ironically, though, Russia remained restrained in recognizing the independence of those breakaway regions, despite repeated supplications from the separatists. At one point the EU and Russia came to a consensus on a peace plan, which the separatists themselves rejected. Tensions would take a turn for the worst when NATO announced its intentions to admit Georgia into the military bloc in 2008. Russian officials knew this would only compel the Kremlin to take aggressive action and recognize the independence of the breakaway regions in Georgia and ultimately use military force there in order to cement it. Hence in August of 2008, Russia launched a full scale invasion of Georgia, clearing ethnic Georgians out of separatist controlled areas. Here we see that Russia did not conquer

all of Georgia, but seized a number of territories in Georgia that were adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia separatist-controlled areas, and later withdrew their forces from those adjacent regions. Russia subsequently recognized the independence of the separatist regions in Georgia in order to justify a continued Russian troop presence specifically in those areas. On account of this, when it comes to the 2022 Ukraine/Russia war, we can expect that within 2 years, Russia will withdraw its troops from many of the regions of eastern Ukraine adjacent to the separatist territories of the Donetsk People's Republic(DPR) and Luhansk People's Republic(LPR), while retaining troop presence in the DPR and LPR. We can also surmise that Russia's main goal in Ukraine was not necessarily to conquer all of Ukraine, but to ethnically cleanse the breakaway regions of whatever remained of Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians in majority Russian areas of eastern Ukraine. Because of this dynamic that played out during the Russo-Georgian war, Ukraine will face a similar outcome. However, there is a power vacuum that would remain in the breakaway regions, one of which no one seems to recognize and one that Ukraine could easily exploit.

Chapter 3: Zelenskyy and the Far Right

While a platform of peace is what brought Volodymyr Zelenskyy to power in Ukraine in 2019, a platform of continued resistance against the Russian invasion of Ukraine is what will keep him in power after 2022. When Zelenskyy first became president of Ukraine in 2019, his attempts to make peace with Russia and end the conflict in eastern Ukraine by allowing the DPR and LPR to hold elections was met with widespread condemnation in Kyiv. Protesters took to the streets demanding that there be no capitulation to Moscow and now following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Zelenskyy is left with no choice but to end the war through victory, not a negotiated settlement. However, it could still be advantageous for him to remain open to re-uniting Russian and Ukrainian speakers in Ukraine. The challenge he faces is overcoming the impact of the Bucha massacre and how that will alter his view of the Russian element in Ukraine. Not to mention, most Ukrainians will view the Bucha Massacre in line with the Holodomor, another major atrocity carried out by Russia against Ukraine back in the 1930s. Ukrainians will expect to have the deaths of innocent in Bucha avenged in some form or fashion. However, in light of what has transpired, this does not change the fact that Zelenskyy is without question the one of the best examples of liberalism in modern history, whose tolerance has had a far reaching effect. On one hand, as a native Russian speaker, he can evoke the support of far right Ukrainian extremists and on the other, he can advocate for far left inclusiveness. When we first entered office, he had the support of both Russian and Ukrainian speakers because of his inclination to non-violence. This is the correct perception of Volodymyr Zelenskyy and is a testament to his broad appeal. In fact, this factor of tolerance often exhibited by Zelenskyy can lead to Ukraine being able to reclaim the Donetsk and Luhansk region without the Ukrainian military firing a single shot. I'll explain. The key to Zelenskyy's success in being able to exploit the power vacuum in eastern Ukraine will be his ability to learn from the mistakes Victor Yanukovich and Barack Obama. Both of these men were elected to the presidency in their respective country in which their ethnic backdrop represented a minority of the overall population. Viktor Yanukovich was president of Ukraine as an ethnic Russian-speaking Ukrainian and Barack Obama was president of the United States as an African American, a demographic that only comprises 12% of the US population. However, the mistake that each made was that they both played the race/ethnicity card toward the end of their respective administrations, which ultimately fragmented their countries. Yanukovich leaned Ukraine in the direction of what represented his ethnic Russian backdrop, while Barack Obama openly supported a movement that represented his ethnic backdrop.

Zelenskyy is in a similar situation, but has not leaned towards what represents his ethnic Jewish backdrop, and for this, he can still evoke some unity between Russian speakers and Ukrainian speakers, which could allow him to take advantage of the power vacuum that will exist in eastern Ukraine. Zelenskyy has the privilege of natural neutrality, not to mention even the radical right group, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) espouses that any non-Ukrainian is capable of inclusion only if they are in the best interest on Ukrainians. Zelenskyy, as head of state, has proven that the Banderist ideology can permit one to rise to leadership in Ukraine if they are in fact in the best interest of Ukrainians. And simply because Zelenskyy has leaned towards the Ukrainian element, in no way can he be considered ethnocentric from the vantage point of the Russian element because he is at the same time a native Russian speaker, and also not ethnic Russian or ethnic Ukrainian. So one can look at the nuance and see that there is a measure of neutrality in Zelenskyy that will only aid Ukraine's ability to regain the separatist controlled Russian occupied areas. Keep in mind, Zelenskyy was going to seek justice for victims of the Odessa fire of 2014 and even after the Russian invasion in 2022, Zelenskyy has condemned some of the actions taken by Ukrainian soldiers during the war, particularly when it comes to torture.

After Amnesty International released a report that criticized Ukraine's tactics of using civilian areas during combat operations, Amnesty was met with widespread criticism from Ukraine and many of its western supporters. Amnesty International, because the report largely pointed out Ukraine's humanitarian violations, ended up being castigated as siding with the aggressor and blaming the victim. Amnesty international traveled to the Donbass region, Kharkiv, and Mykolaiv and found evidence that Ukraine was setting up military bases in hospitals and schools, which is a violation of international human rights law. Amnesty also interviewed residents in those areas who stated that they were very uncomfortable with Ukrainian forces setting up artillery near their homes. It was also discovered that there was enough wooded areas that the Ukrainian army could have used to set up their bases against the Russian forces. Ukraine, since February 24, 2022, was forced to defend against a brutal Russian invasion, which saw Russian forces carry out summary executions and war crimes in multiple areas of Ukraine, most ominously in Bucha, where a massacre took place that involved the indiscriminate killing of Ukrainian men, women, and children. The upside to the Amnesty report condemning Ukraine is that it becomes impossible to deny that the Russian military did indeed carry out the Bucha massacre, which Amnesty has documented in detail. International Human Rights law holds both sides of a conflict accountable to laws regarding the protection of civilian areas, and this led many to subsequently

consider if the defending nation should be allowed some freedom to use any means at its disposal to resist an oncoming invasion from a larger aggressor that is employing unscrupulous methods to occupy territory. In light of this, one has to realize that other defensive entities would be entitled to those same rights, and it has come to be the case that weaker forces around the world are being allotted some leeway in terms of how aggressive actions are perceived by the international community. Yet it can be explained in many cases that tactics which do endanger civilian areas are, in an objective sense, actually imperative and also effective in defending a nation. The first Chechen war is a clear example. But I also try to present to the reader that there are other ways to establish deterrence that do not involve endangering civilians or engaging in direct hostilities with the occupying force and may actually have a greater intended effect of deterrence and could ultimately help Ukraine win back the breakaway territories in the east without firing a single shot at the occupiers.

When the full-scale Russian invasion began of February 24, 2022, Zelenskyy made numerous appeals to the Russian population for the first few months, displaying a patience amid incidences of Russian artillery that would maim and obliterate numerous Ukrainian soldiers as well as civilians. This strategy of appealing to Russian people was a good strategy on Zelesnkyy's part because victory for Ukraine will be contingent on who they can work with inside Russian occupied areas of Ukraine. And at the beginning of the Russian invasion, there were demonstrations that broke out in Russia on behalf of the Ukrainian people. However, as the war dragged on towards the sixth month, Zelenskyy's rhetoric towards the Russian element has changed considerably, and this may be an unwise strategy because Zelenskyy's success or probability of reclaiming lost territories in the east of Ukraine will be contingent on his ability to recruit inside of a population that largely identifies as Russian, which is why his liberalism could be the secret weapon that makes Ukrainian victory possible, not to mention his fluency in Russian is a huge weapon for Ukraine right now, making it all the more imperative for Ukraine to make some room for the Russian language. To put it bluntly, clandestine operations aimed at trying to get the breakaway regions back into Ukraine's sphere of influence will require fluency in Russian. On that note, one can explain how reclaiming lost territory without resorting to tactics that were largely effective for Chechnya, could be possible if Ukraine plays its cards right. Chechnya used tactics like terrorism and hostage taking which had the intended effect of wearing down Russian forces during the first Chechen war, but as will be explained, Ukraine may not have to resort to such tactics, and this may ironically work against Russia's goals in Ukraine. This writing makes reference to ISIS and Hamas's airstrike evasion tactics which experts agree are top notch, and explains how

Ukraine will have to build up its underground infrastructure in similar fashion if they want to remain impervious to foreign aggression and keep civilians safe from Russian artillery for years to come. Furthermore, while some in the west seeks a negotiated end to the war—myself included, such an outcome if Ukraine is left without its own internationally recognized borders will likely put the executive office in Ukraine in political hot water with the extremists, considering how peace can often be conflated as capitulation and betrayal by the most nationalistic elements of the country. Just look what happened in the 1980s to the Egyptian president and the Israeli president after they both sought to establish peace with their country's longstanding enemies. Anwar Sadat, Egypt's president, was assassinated by Arab extremists at a military parade, not long after he signed the Camp David accords which normalized Egypt's relations with Israel and officially ceded the Sinai Peninsula to Israeli control. Yitskah Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel, was assassinated by a Jewish extremist while holding a rally for the Oslo II accords which were aimed at making peace with the Palestinians and agreeing to withdraw some Israeli settlements from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as give the Palestinians some political control and autonomy in those areas. The Oslo II accords were largely opposed by Jewish extremists who insisted on Israel's claim on all of Palestine and who at the same time did not believe that the Palestinians would cease hostilities. As we see in those cases, the extremists lobbying for a continued war to see its final end is not about advocating for the rights of the living, but is about advocating for the rights of those who have already died for the cause. This is why the far right in Ukraine were unhappy with the Minsk accords, because the Minsk accords essentially disregarded the efforts of those who died trying to reclaim Donetsk and Luhansk from violent separatists. Unfortunately, this is the stage that the Ukrainian/Russian conflict has reached—peace essentially being a form capitulation for the Ukrainian army. Russia has also taken measures to stifle speech that does not support continued Russian aggression. This dynamic is also why the militants in Gaza continue to resist Israeli influence, and also why ISIS remains in operation in Iraq and Syria. I was watching a video online and it involved guy walking around the Palestinian areas and asking random people if they wanted peace. Well, many of those who were asked this question responded with a resounding “yes”, but when asked specifically if they wanted peace with Israel, the majority of those asked this question emphatically stated “no.” From that small sample, even the women there were insistent of avoiding peace with Israel. Only some of the men who were asked gave an answer that took into the account the benefits of peace with Israel, benefits such as more freedom. Other men in the video stated that their only concern about Israel were the extremists—those Israelis who want the

entire land of Palestine to go under Israeli occupation. As it stands today, many in the west support the continued efforts of some of these groups seeking to resist capitulation, but at the same time many in the west are unable to see how capitulation is why some places in the southern United States started ruminating on the vices of capitulation? It would be bad for the country. What if native American groups started doing the same thing? Or what if Mexico started pondering on the vices of capitulation concerning the state of Texas which originally belonged to Mexico? These are disconcerting prospects, but very possible if social pressure becomes aligned with such goals. Russian operatives have been using this dynamic of separatism to weaken the US internally, and to great effect. There were many Russian elements back in 2016 that were linked to social media pages promoting entities like the “alternative right” and “black lives matter”, both of which ultimately ended up fragmenting the country due to the extremist elements within those movements. Such actions on the part of Russian operatives set the country on a trajectory toward a major political overhaul. In fact the US and Russia, have used clandestine means to weaken each other. Academia is well-versed on NATO expansion. To this day, Russia continues to foment division in the US. The FBI recently raided a socialist pro-African group linked to the Russian government, and this turned out to be another example of how Russia can use critical theories circulating in the US to encourage separatism—the end result being what we are seeing in Ukraine—violent conflict. But now, Ukraine may have its turn to foment separatism in a way that will benefit Ukraine. Separatism has a way of shaming people into the cause and putting the entire geography at significant risk of a human rights catastrophe. Hence, the pro-Russian separatists ultimately have to take responsibility for the entire conflict. In no way, this justifies Ukraine shelling separatist areas and hurting civilians there since 2014, but it does highlight how separatism is a scourge to be avoided because of the predicted outcome—mass aggression and war. But beware, Ukraine can apply these divisive tactics as well, and to great effect that would lead to an unpredictable and seemingly impossible outcome that benefits Ukraine, one that no one could predict.

We can see that in an ongoing war, when capitulation or surrender becomes a vice, the war itself becomes endless. However, in the case of Ukraine, the only median outlook a pacifist can have in this unfortunate circumstance of peace becoming capitulation, if not betrayal, is one that can articulate strategy of cleverness, where total victory could be attained by flattery or non-war-crime related activity. Otherwise, in disregarding those other non-violent methods, anyone supporting victory for Ukraine must accept the reality that such an outcome could only be expected to occur with the use of the some of

the same guerrilla and brutal tactics used by organizations that are largely castigated by much of the western world. This writing tries to show that while these brutal tactics have been used with effect by countries like Chechnya during the first Chechen war, there are other ways to win a war which go beyond the use of arms or engaging in direct hostilities.

At the moment, there is a strong channel of money and arms supply to Ukrainian forces, but it should be made clear that as this conflict drags on, Ukrainian forces may feel compelled to use tactics akin to the ones used by those who share similar goals of avoiding airstrikes and reclaiming lost territories. It is very likely that the Ukrainian strategy could find itself strongly aligned with these strategies used by Mideast insurgent groups like ISIS and Hamas, whose backdrop involves contention with a military force much larger than their own. Much of ISIS's leadership is comprised of Saddam loyalists who refuse to accept the overthrow of their longstanding leader. Furthermore, as far as the Ukrainian counteroffensive goes, there is seemingly no way to stop what has been set in motion by the Russian invasion—the prospect that Russians and Ukrainians are now enemies to the very core. Hence why Ukraine could end up under some form of far right ideology, even if its interwoven with some measure of western democracy after the war end. The topic of national socialism is a major controversy for Ukraine. The book Anthony's Treaty tries to lay the foundation that national socialism espoused in some parts of Ukraine has a different context due to the historical backdrop of Germany being a liberator to a nation of people that were almost entirely wiped out by Soviet dictator, Josef Stalin. Immediately after the Germans in World War II had taken over Ukraine, the leader of the OUN(Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists), Stephan Bandera and other officials had declared Ukraine's independence. The OUN was largely against Poles and Russians, both of whom represented to Ukraine a longstanding oppression of their unique language and culture. Stephen Bandera even wrote a letter in 1941 to Hitler explaining his case for Ukrainian sovereignty. However, upon hearing the declaration of independence for Ukraine in 1941, the German forces immediately arrested those who made the declaration and sent them to prison camps, where they would stay for the most of the war. Among those arrested was Stephan Bandera. His followers, however, remained active in Ukraine, collaborating with German forces against Poles and Jews and the Soviet Union. Bandera was later released from the prison camp late in the war in the hopes that he could help Germany defend against the Soviet counter-offensive. After the war, Bandera traveled to the American zone of West Germany and he eventually became an asset for UK and US intelligence services, having knowledge of the inner workings of the Soviet Union. UK intelligence began sponsoring

the OUN, and the US would protect Bandera by blocking his extradition to the Soviet Union, whom had declared all Ukrainians to be Soviet citizens. Bandera, however, would later be tracked down and killed by KGB agents. In 2018, Ukraine designated Bandera's birthday on January 1st to be a national holiday. Ukraine has tried to clean up his image, but Bandera remains a polarizing figure of which many eastern and southern Ukrainians consider to be a Nazi collaborator and thus hard to identify with. The Nazis themselves, however, wrote that the OUN were indifferent to Jews and would either help or harm them depending on where they stood on Ukraine. It seems like one of the founding tenets of the OUN lean along those same lines of only accommodating non-Ukrainians if they stand behind the Ukrainian cause. This may be the only way to explain the juxtaposition of Volodymyr Zelenskyy as Ukraine's president and the presence of this element in the Ukrainian government—that being Zelenskyy fully backing the Ukrainian people and language and thus gaining the support and respect of the far right in Ukraine. This also explains how native Russian speakers Leonid Kuchma and Viktor Yanukovich were still able to garner enough support in Ukraine to hold office, since, despite being native Russian speakers, they were initially considered in the early part of their tenures to be in the best interest of Ukrainians. It is also important to distinguish the controversial Azov battalion's Nazi origins from the overarching framework of Ukrainian culture, by way of acknowledging the fact that much of the Azov battalion's original neo-Nazi membership was comprised of native Russian-speakers from eastern Ukraine. They were not products of Ukrainian culture in the western parts of Ukraine, where the majority of native Ukrainian speakers reside. Another thing to take into account is that in Ukraine, the propagation of both Soviet-era nostalgia and leaders like Joseph Stalin, who was the main perpetrator of the Holodomor (murder and starvation of millions of Ukrainians), can give rise to counter-extremism such as Nazism. Because Azov was part and parcel of a largely de-centralized Ukrainian resistance to the pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine during the 8 year civil war (there were many private militias fighting the separatists), the Ukrainian government basically annexed the paramilitary group, as well as other private militias, into the Ukrainian army...all for the sake of a more organized resistance to separatist and Russian forces in the Donbass region. At the same time, the Ukrainian army did not assume their ideology. It was the other way around. The private militias were indoctrinated and consigned into true Ukrainian nationalism. It was true that the Azov were instrumental in helping Ukraine, and are at the same time, highly skilled, tactical and pose a real danger if they continue to uphold their Nazi ideology and resist full integration into the Ukrainian army. But such is unlikely since neither President

Zelenskyy, nor much of the native Ukrainian-speaking populations of Ukraine would tolerate it. Meanwhile, the Azov had begun to disavow many of its Nazi perspectives.

Now that Ukrainians and Russians have become adapted to the idea of warfare and death and conflict with each other, many will have no qualms about pursuing this reality for years to come. It is no different than Hamas or ISIS, as both of these entities have settled on the reality of war and death and insist on maintaining this for an indefinite period of time, at least until their goals of reclaiming lost territory is finally reached. The insurgent strategies were employed by the Chechens during the first Chechen war and to great success and is perhaps the most relevant example of how a smaller eastern European country could resist the onslaught of a larger Russian force advancing into their country. The sugar-coated view is easier to read about. The realistic perspective, however, forces one to accept the realities that we live in in terms of how nations are formed and defended. The militants in Chechnya applied warfare strategies of which insurgents in the Middle East are using today, strategies that involve guerrilla tactics and subterranean warfare. In hindsight, if one believes that Chechnya was right in defending themselves against Russian imperialism during the first Chechen war, then one is automatically forced to maintain that the tactics they used to make that happen were right as well. While it is explained how these tactics worked for Chechnya, it is also explained how those tactics would theoretically apply to Ukraine, along with the possibility of Ukraine being able to avoid resorting to those extremes, while still retaining a high probability of regaining lost territory, if Ukrainian intelligence apparatus could simply apply some old tricks used by their US and Russian counterparts.

Chapter 4: The Value of Subterranean Warfare

There is one thing that the Ukrainian insurgency will provide to the world. Further advances and knowledge in subterranean warfare and anti-missile defense, which will be a likely strategy that Ukrainian insurgents may apply against the Russian occupation, seeing that the only method of warfare used by major powers to stop insurgency, in most cases to no avail, has been airstrikes. This has been the case throughout modern history. Ukraine demonstrated the effectiveness of secret underground tunnels when they put up a fierce intransigence amid the Russian assault on Mariupol during the Ukraine/Russia war of 2022. In mid-April of that year at the steel factory called Azovstal Iron and Steel Works located in Mariupol, Ukrainian defense forces took refuge there and conducted an extraordinary resistance to Russian forces. The factory was fortified with steel and underground tunnels, making it hard for Russian airstrikes to accurately locate and destroy Ukrainian forces. When Russian troops made their way further into Mariupol and surrounded the factory, Ukrainian forces, because of the fortification that the underground shelter provided, remained adamant to fight till the last man. Back in February at the start of the invasion of Ukraine, Russia launched an amphibious assault on Mariupol and shelled it relentlessly, killing 10 Greek civilians and a 6 year old girl. Back in 2015, a series of Russian airstrikes had killed 29 civilians in Mariupol. By the end of February/early March, Mariupol, though still under Ukrainian control, was completely surrounded by Russian forces whose shelling of the city cut off access to water, internet, and electricity. This stoppage of vital resources was the only means of stopping the Ukrainian resistance. Many who were killed in Mariupol were not sheltered in subterranean bunkers. On March 2nd, as the Russians were preventing civilians from evacuating the city, hundreds of civilians were killed after a residential area was shelled relentlessly by Russian forces. The next day, the shelling continued as the DPR urged Ukrainian fighters to surrender or face guided artillery strikes. The Russian Ministry of Defense reported that the Russian troops seized more areas nearby. Meanwhile, the supplies in Mariupol were gradually running low, and calls were made for reinforcements and the evacuation of civilians as the Russian forces were shelling critical lifelines such as hospitals. Had the underground fortifications at the Azovstal factory contained a secret tunnel long enough to reach Ukrainian controlled areas, a supply line could have been established that would have allowed civilians to escape and also provided Ukrainian troops hunkered down in the bunker with vital reinforcements to continue resisting the Russian onslaught. A ceasefire had been subsequently enacted so that the 200,000 civilians trapped in Mariupol could evacuate, but this was because the Red

Cross got involved as a facilitator and promised to ensure the establishment of ceasefire agreements which would enable civilians to exit the city. An extensive secret underground network capable of reaching multiple areas of Ukraine would have allowed civilians to escape regardless of Russia's operations. Anyhow, when the negotiated ceasefire was finally in place, civilians were only briefly allowed to vacate Mariupol and seek refuge in the city of Zaporizhzhia. Reason being, is because the Russian forces commenced shelling the city which forced civilians to turn back and stay put. Russia's understanding of the ceasefire was that civilians would be allowed to leave, but through a corridor towards Russia, not towards Zaporizhzhia. Ukraine, however, feared that Russia would send Ukrainian civilians held captive to secret concentration camps either in Russia or separatist held areas. This first attempt on March 5th at establishing humanitarian corridors only resulted in 17 people evacuating. The second try the next day was once again subverted by Russian artillery strikes which destroyed the city's fuel pipeline and access to heat in much of the city, resulting in 700,000 people ending up without heat and subsequently in danger of freezing to death in temperatures that had gone below zero. The last remaining communication line, a cellular tower, was damaged by Russian shelling. The Red Cross said that the new ceasefire was in principle only and that much of the other circumstances surrounding how civilians would evacuate remained vague. One of the roads that was going to be used to evacuate civilians was mined. And on March 8th, Russian forces shelled one of the evacuation routes as civilians were being evacuated. Large numbers of civilians were killed in Mariupol and many were buried in mass graves. Even as this was taking place, Russia managed to shell the gravesites where many victims were being buried. An attempt at another ceasefire was stifled on March 9th, when Russian forces began shooting at construction workers and checkpoints established for evacuation. This was followed by an airstrike on a maternity ward and hospital where three civilians were killed and 17 wounded. Three days later, as Russian troops captured the eastern parts of Mariupol, roughly 82 ethnic Greeks were able to get out of Mariupol through one of the corridors established. This was followed by more artillery bombardments of Mariupol by Russian forces. Vadym Boychenko, the mayor of Mariupol, said that on March 13th, the Russian military unleashed hundreds of bombs in a 24 hour period as food and water had become extremely scarce. The Ukrainian forces were, nonetheless, able to provide some resistance and destroy a number of Russian military vehicles as well as kill 150 Russian troops fighting in the city. Meanwhile, ethnic Turks were on standby waiting to be rescued and evacuated by the Turkish government. On March 14th, a convoy of evacuees were allowed to evacuate Mariupol, and the Russian Defense Ministry confirmed that

aid was being supplied to the city. The next day on March 15th, even more civilians were able to leave, roughly 20,000. On March 16th, however, a theater in Mariupol where hundreds of civilians had taken refuge was hit by a Russian airstrike. It was reported that 600 people were killed as a result. This number turned to be an exaggeration. But moreover, the underground basement at the theater allowed scores of people to survive the airstrike there. This gives credence to the effectiveness of underground structures providing the highest level of effectiveness in evading airstrikes. After the attack, over 100 of the people inside hiding in the basement survived and emerged from the theater debris on March 17th. In fact, Ukrainian officials initially reported that there was no one killed during the strike.

The assault continued when 2 days later the DPR forces seized the Mariupol airport, driving out the Ukrainian forces. When the DPR advanced, shortly thereafter, into the center of Mariupol, clashes between them and the Ukrainian forces took place at the Azovstal Steel plant. During this time, allegations that Russia was deporting civilians to camps and remote areas of Russia began circulating. After Russia denied that such allegation were true, another school was bombed in Mariupol, a school that was being used by 400 civilians to shelter themselves from the shelling taking place in the city. In the meantime, the Russian forces continued to demand that Ukraine surrender. However Ukrainian forces continued to refuse. On March 21st, Russia responded with a barrage of airstrikes which led the mayor and other city officials to flee shortly after. The Russians at this point were going around the center of Mariupol declaring victory as Russian troops advanced deeper into the city. On March 27th, the mayor called for an immediate evacuation of the remaining residents in Mariupol as food and water had been totally depleted to the point that even Ukrainian soldiers had nothing to consume. Despite such deprivation, Ukrainian soldiers insisted on fighting to the last man, leaving neither civilian nor soldier behind. The next day, the mayor admitted that Mariupol was under Russian control and that 5000 people had perished during the siege. Ukraine reported that 20000-30000 had been captured by Russian forces and sent to camps located in Russia. That same day, the Russians occupied the military headquarters, administrative building, as well as the headquarters of the Azov regiment. The Russians, throughout the conflict, had altogether shot down 90% of the rescue helicopters sent by Ukrainian President Zelenskyy to conduct evacuations as well as resupply the Azov soldiers taking cover at the Azovstal Steel plant. The Ukrainian military had no choice but to eventually splinter into multiple cells after the Russians captured 267 marines from the 503rd Battalion of the Ukrainian Naval Forces on April 4th. This caused a rift among Ukrainian fighters from the Azov regiment and the 36th Separate Marine Brigade, whose lines of communication had been broken by

the surrender of the 267 marines of the 503rd Battalion of Ukraine's Naval forces. Ukraine, in response, attempted to resupply the Azov fighters stationed in the Azovstal steel factory, but the deliveries could not be made due to Russian fighters shooting down the MI-8s used for the mission. After the Russians captured the bridge leading to the Azovstal steel factory, they were able to take control of the fishing port and cut the line of access between the Ukrainian soldiers at the fishing port and those at the steel factory. Had there been an underground route to the Ukrainian forces at the fishing port, things would have been different. Russia cutting off access by destroying the bridge was a major blow that coincided with a severe shortage of ammo that limited the amount of resistance that the Ukrainian troops holding out at the factory could apply against incoming Russian soldiers. At this juncture, it was easy to forecast that Mariupol would, within a short time, fall into the hands of the DPR and Russian forces. A number of Ukrainian troops from the pocket of Ukrainian soldiers from the 36th Separate Marine Brigade held up at the Ilich steel plant were taken captive on April 11th. Some of them managed to escape and join with the Azov regiment at the Azovstal steel plant, while others were killed en route. The leader, Baranyuk, was captured by Russian forces as he tried to flee the city rather than link up with the Azov. The remaining 1,026 Ukrainian fighters at the Ilich steel plant surrendered the next day, which left Mariupol to be defended by two small pockets of Ukrainian soldiers. Unsurprisingly, the Azov leadership was disappointed with Baranyuk because he did not relay the plan to escape the Ilich steel plant with other military personnel, nor try to link up with the Azov regiment as others who escaped the plant would try to do. Instead, he, as Iliia Samoilenko would express, tried to flee "taking with him people, tanks and ammunition." Subsequently, Ukrainian fighters surrounded by Russian forces at the Azovstal plant requested reinforcement and more supplies, informing the Ukrainian command that the situation was dire, but that fighting was still possible. The steel plant was a strong fortification and there were many underground tunnels that allowed people there to take cover and remain safe from air strikes by Russian forces. It also provided stealth to Ukrainian troops which made it even harder for enemy forces to locate them. However, without a supply line, there was no way for Ukrainian forces to fend off continuous Russian strikes because ammunition, food, and water would eventually run out and leave those sheltered there with no choice but to either surrender or die from destitution.

After a port was captured near Mariupol's beach, some of the Azov fighters from the Azovstal plant rescued and evacuated the 500 Ukrainian troops and police surrounded at the port. According to an officer of the Ukrainian Marines, the Azov breached the port and provided cover fire for the Ukrainian troops stuck at the port,

allowing them to escape. This left those Azov regiment and other Ukrainian fighters at the Azovstal steel plant as the last remaining pocket of Ukrainian soldiers resisting the Russian advance. Yet, they refused to surrender amid Russia's threats to annihilate them. The remaining number of Ukrainian fighters were estimated to be around 2900, according to Russian officials. Even in light of the Russian control over the city, the Russian troops had not yet been ordered to raid the Azovstal plant. It was believed by the Kremlin that Ukrainian forces would surrender once they ran out of critical supplies. But Ukrainian officials took it to mean that Russia was admitting that they had no ability to infiltrate the complex infrastructure of the plant. The subterranean aspects of the steel plant was akin to the methods used by ISIS and Hamas to successfully evade airstrikes in the middle east. However, Russia's main goal in Mariupol was connecting the city to Crimea so that water and other supplies could flow there. Once this goal was reached, Russia felt no rush to take control of the steel plant, figuring that an all-out assault there would needlessly waste military personnel and be extremely costly.

On April 22nd, Russian troops began expanding their presence outside the Azovstal steel plant very close to the positions of Ukrainian soldiers in Azovstal. It was confirmed that day that the only remaining Ukrainian forces in Mariupol were those hiding out in the steel plant. Subsequently, Russia began pulling some of its troops out of Mariupol and reassigning them to other parts of eastern Ukraine. This was followed by a barrage of airstrikes on the Azovstal facility by Russian forces, one of them striking a military field hospital, wounding hundreds more. Just after this on April 30th, a humanitarian corridor was established which was brokered by Antonio Guterres when he visited Moscow the week before. Gradually at the start of May, civilians hiding in the Azovstal facility were being allowed to leave. 100 left Mariupol on May 2nd, while Russia pulled many of its forces out of the city and redeployed them elsewhere in the Donbass region. This was confirmed by the US Department of Defense. Following the pull-out, Russia's offensive in Mariupol had become strictly airstrikes. The following day on May 3rd, however, the Russians attempted to breach the plant through the tunnel system after they had been tipped off on the location of the underground network by an electrician in what was an act of treachery on his part. Two days later, more civilians had been evacuated from the Azovstal facility through a humanitarian corridor designated to operate between 8am and 6pm.

The Russians in a final ploy to get Ukrainian troops at the Azovstal facility to surrender, used thermobaric bombs on Ukrainian soldiers. After a long standoff by the Azov regiment and other Ukrainian fighters, President Zelenskyy would give the order for Ukrainian forces in Mariupol to surrender. This comes after he vowed

not to cede any territory to Russian forces. Subsequently, the remaining civilians would be completely evacuated by May 7th. The remaining soldiers who came out to negotiate surrender were taken captive by Russian soldiers who would evacuate them from the plant, treat those who were wounded, and detain them along with the remaining Ukrainian soldiers at an area controlled by the DPR forces. The Ukrainian command confirmed that the battle was over and Mariupol was now in the hands of the DPR and Russian forces. The last remaining Ukrainian soldiers surrendered to the Russians on May 20th. The Russian President Vladimir Putin promised to treat the prisoners of war according to international standards. However, some in the Russian government were against allowing members of the Azov regiment to be released in the case of future prisoner swaps. Ukrainian resistance using the underground fortifications at the Azovstal plant was a good example of just how effective tunnels are at combating airstrikes.

Throughout the history of warfare, subterranean structures have been used against enemy forces with great success. Back during the Arab invasions in the 7th century, monks found that they could successfully evade Arab forces by hiding underground. Back in WWII, the Japanese were effective in building underground fortification against US air power, and so were the Chinese, who built underground fortifications against Japanese air power. The Vietnamese during the Vietnam war was possibly the best example of how effective underground fortifications are against a superior air force. Many of the larger military powers, have had no formidable answer for this type of defense, even against small pockets of militants. The current conflict in the Middle East(2001-2022 as of now) is marred by the continued survival of these insurgent militant groups. Major military powers like Russia and the United States have carried out a number of aerial attacks against them in recent years, but only with enough success to weaken the threat, not totally eliminate it. In recent years, Israel has faced numerous problems with the underground operations of Hamas, the militant group that controls the Gaza strip. Not only for smuggling resources into Gaza, the tunnels used by Hamas has allowed them to, at one point, ambush and kidnap an Israeli soldier from Israeli territory. Hamas is also able to conceal rocket fire locations with the use of the tunnels, making it more difficult for Israel to locate and destroy them. This underground methodology is also how ISIS, the Al Qaeda offshoot terror organization comprised of Saddam loyalists, continues to launch ambush attacks against Syrian regime soldiers, even after years of being bombarded by both US and Russian airstrikes. The operations of Hamas and ISIS and their continued survival in small numbers is setting the stage for a new type of warfare: Subterranean warfare. This will be further pursued in Ukraine as insurgents there look to

resist the Russian occupation by evading airstrikes. It has become obvious that the larger powers have no real answer on how to battle effectively against underground forces, other than planting explosives at the entry or exit points or using aerial bombers to drop deep penetrating missiles into tunnel locations. This, however, is largely ineffective since many underground structures have detours that lead to multiple entry and exit points, making the destruction of them more complicated. It also doesn't help that the sections which have been demolished by explosives are easily repairable. Another issue surrounding the search and destroy aspect of combating this underground system is that soldiers are often unable to determine whether or not the tunnels are booby trapped. The use of vacuum bombs in Syria, which can devastate anyone hiding in tunnels, has still not eliminated the ISIS threat since a major issue with attacking tunnel locations is finding them in the first place.

This type of warfare has been effective for centuries; what ISIS and Hamas is doing is bringing notice to it. And now Ukrainian insurgents will likely follow suit. Most nations in the Middle East and around the world for that matter already have these underground structures in place and will only be emboldened against stronger nations the longer a small number of militants—relatively speaking—are able to survive by simply building underground fortifications. Israel and the US are working on technology that will allow them to detect underground tunnels, and if they are successful, we may see an end to the prolonged conflict in the Middle East and in Eastern Europe since such technology would also allow Russia to put a final end to Ukrainian insurgency. But if this is not the case, then we can expect that everyone there will attempt to pursue self determination without regard for another country's superior air power. The technology used to detect underground tunnels involve the use of seismic or gravity detectors. Seismic detectors are able to measure the vibrations as they pass objects beneath the surface of the earth, and if able to find a common anomaly that would identify the existence of a tunnel, those detectors could be effective. However, there would still need to be intelligence that pinpoints the general area of where a tunnel may exist. Gravity detectors like gravimeters are able to detect changes in the Earth's gravitational field based on the density beneath the surface. The presence of a void underground would reduce the gravitation force and would thus show up accordingly on the gravimeter. Another method is measuring the voltage of an electrical current, which would move at a lower voltage inside a void. Ground Penetrating radar(GPR) is another device used. to detect tunnels. GPR uses pulses of radio frequency energy to see underground. The distances detected underground however is limited, since it maxes around a depth of 50 ft. Tunnels have been dug by drug smugglers and militants as far as 100 ft beneath the surface.

The use of bunker busters(aerial bombers employed by the US against ISIS) which can penetrate hundreds of feet of both earth and concrete, is still challenged by the possible extensiveness of the tunnels. Some tunnels have multiple detours that allow for escape and reconstruction of damaged sections. Drug smugglers now present a much higher risk in terms national security, since a tunnel system is both a defensive and offensive weapon—irrespective of its use in drug smuggling activities. The arrest of two Houthi militants at the US/Mexican border in 2021 raises the question of vulnerability, since one can posit that infiltration of Latin America by radical militants puts the US at risk of not only the implication of undetected drugs coming into the country, but also the implication surrounding the likelihood of a militant attack or ambush initiated from an underground tunnel originating from Mexico. The tunnel entries built by Hamas and ISIS are about 1 meter wide and go as deep as 100 ft beneath the surface. Pneumatic jackhammers are often used to dig out the tunnels and workers cover about two to three meters a day using them. Militants usually employ skilled workers to do the job. These workers normally have some knowledge of the engineering and geological aspects that go into constructing a tunnel. The tunnels are often dug from the inside of a shelter or home, which provides operatives with more stealth. ISIS militants who have escaped enemy fire, often seek refuge in nearby villages and pay residents there to help them construct tunnels. There are some hazards associated with the initial constructing process, such as cave-ins and collapses. It's common for workers to perish during the excavation process, and collapses usually result from not waiting long enough after a torrential rainstorm to resume tunnel construction. As a result, soil erosion, which often compromises the landscape, puts workers underground at risk of being trapped after the collapse. Casualties have ironically allowed Hamas and ISIS to improvise on the underground construction process and gain a greater understanding of it altogether. Hamas has in turn managed to equip their tunnel system with electricity, concrete walls and ceiling, and is able to conduct communications using landlines, making it all the more difficult to detect their position. Ukrainian militias had success using landlines during the war in Donbass, keeping Russian drones from detecting their positions. This type of technical knowledge developed by mid-east insurgencies could be of advantage to Ukrainian insurgents and it is predictable that they may establish a channel of communication with militants in the middle east in order to gain more technical expertise on tunnel construction. Hamas has been able to smuggle concrete into Gaza and has used it to fortify their tunnel system. Hamas has stated that keeping the width of the tunnels thin(roughly 3ft), while digging out the tunnels so that the ceiling is arched reduces the chances of collapse. After excavation, the tunnels are stabilized

with 12-18 inch wide concrete arches, spanning roughly 3ft wide, and laid to sit atop 2 roughly 5ft high rectangular concrete slabs—one concrete slab holds up one end of the arch, while the other concrete slab holds up the other end of the arch. The tunnel diggers likely set each concrete arch and slabs as they go digging out the tunnel, making sure to remain under the arch as they continue digging, in order to mitigate the chances of being caught directly under soil and rock in the event of a potential collapse. The cement arch would provide stability and safety while excavating. The slabs on the side could protect against cave-ins. From videos showing Hamas tunnels, the part of the arch that sits atop the slabs is engineered and cut in such a way that the slabs on the walls of the tunnel are stabilized by the arch, preventing the chances of a cave in. Cave-ins are usually a very common accident on sand beaches during the vertical excavation process by beach-goers. The way to reduce this risk on sandy beaches is by applying wooden boards and other supports to the walls of the vertical excavation. Moreover, Hamas has developed rocket-making factories underground and they also have a deep-sea diving team that collects old shell fragments which are then made into warheads. Ukraine is said to have a secret underground factory where they build long-range rockets called grim missiles that can strike a target at distance over 200 kilometers.

ISIS, on the other hand, has a less featured system, but has learned over the years how to survive direct air assaults by hiding underground. It's likely that ISIS will build their tunnels based on the proximity of gas field locations. Many of the recent ambush attacks by ISIS against Syria have occurred near oil and gas fields. Oil and gas are both important elements of warfare, as they allow militants to maintain electrical, logistical, and communication channels. Much like Hamas has developed underground tunnels into Egypt for the purpose of smuggling. Ukrainian insurgents make seek to develop a similar underground network into Poland for the same reason. In fact all of Ukraine needs to be fortified with an extensive underground system. Much of the new technologies in this regard should be heavily geared towards Ukraine's development of underground tunnel systems. It is proven that areas which are fortified with subterranean infrastructure are much harder for occupying forces to control. Hence, Ukraine could be a real force as a small country, seeing that with a massive underground infrastructure, they could exert an inordinate amount of geopolitical influence that would not require much eastern or western backing. This is the route to true Ukrainian independence, but will require time and effort and secrecy.

The biggest threat to any underground structure is heavy rain. In most tunnel collapses, heavy rain is often the main cause. Geologically speaking, rain effects on underground tunnels are often deterred by things such as concrete, asphalt or mulch which shields

the soil from the effects of heavy rain or wind. In tunnel collapses, after the rain water hits the soil, it eventually infiltrates its way to the tunnels surrounding rock, weakening it through erosion. Water gets into cracks and joints, eventually causing the rocks to break open and split apart. At the moment, one can presume that precipitation is perhaps the greatest threat to underground tunnels. This in itself is a form of intelligence since it's likely that, because of this, militants do not shelter or construct underground during days of heavy rain. They may also, as a way to improvise, start constructing tunnel paths directly underneath surface paths formed with concrete or asphalt, i. e. city streets. This would lessen the effect of heavy rain on tunnel stability. However, the lack of arable land and prevalence of prolonged droughts in the middle east still allows for uninterrupted construction of sustainable tunnels there. This allows us to comprehend the notion that underground structures would be more operational or populated during seasons of drought as opposed to seasons of precipitation. It's likely that militants in the middle east have already planned in advance for climate factors. It is also said that constructing tunnels with an arch ceiling adds a bit more stability than constructing the tunnels with a flat ceiling.

Ukraine should not only be able to construct the most elaborate tunnels, but also develop technology to detect them. This would help prepare Ukraine for future incidences of separatism. But the approach to this field of conflict should be applied with some discrimination since factors like 'What the tunnels are being used for' need to be taken into consideration. Smuggling purposes would not warrant a counter-terrorism search and destroy operation since civilians are often employed and in many cases forced into transporting cargo to and from. If the tunnels are used for both, then it's all the more difficult to discriminate accordingly. Ideas have been presented which propose that soldiers infiltrate on foot into the actual tunnels and conduct operations from there. The challenges to this idea is that signals are often weaker or disabled below the surface, making it difficult to maintain good communications. Another issue is the question of soldiers having the necessary oxygen to carry out prolonged, subterranean missions. Beneath the surface, oxygen levels are usually lower, which puts soldiers at risk and endangers the mission. There is also the potential of carbon monoxide poisoning should soldiers be exposed to heavy smoke. Gas mask and other oxygen-storing equipment would be ineffective in protecting personnel against a carbon monoxide build-up within such an enclosed space. Ideally being able to detect and display tunnels on above surface radar makes for a more astute counter tunnel strategy since personnel would be less required to enter the underground fortification. They can simply wait for operatives to exit the underground structure before apprehending the situation. This

makes it easier to discriminate exactly who goes into and out of the tunnels.

The above surface structures provide some protection to underground tunnels. Concrete and asphalt reduce the effects of heavy rain on the soil and averts the possibility of rock erosion beneath the surface, which is normally a factor that causes many underground structures to collapse. This makes concrete the number one area of interest in developing an underground tunnel. If the workers are apprehending the effects of precipitation, then it's likely that they have improvised by routing tunnels to follow an alignment with the above surface concrete. If that is not the case, then they would have improvised to only construct or inhabit tunnels during dry seasons, and reduce operations there during wet seasons. Gaza militants fortify their tunnels with concrete surroundings, however due to creep (which happens to concrete under sustained load), concrete can easily collapse underground. Heavy soil and rain infiltration into underground rocks cause rocks to break, losing their ability to support the surrounding soil. The wet heavier soil then places more pressure on the underground tunnels, eventually causing them to collapse. There is a technique called rock bolting, which helps stabilize a tunnel system and is commonly used in tunnel construction. Rock bolts are simply long anchor bolts that are drilled into the ceiling of a tunnel in order to keep stability and prevent collapse from sustained load. Rock bolts are usually used in tandem with wire mesh to further reduce the risk of collapse. Compared to other places, the Middle East presents less risk of tunnel collapse, due to the prevalence of droughts. Underground tunneling would be much more hazardous in tropical climates where it rains regularly, making the construction of underground tunnels aligned to the above ground concrete much more imperative. Paved roadways in urban areas provide a security aspect for tunnelers and a security risk for cities, should militants apply this type of warfare.

Mitigating the chances of being in the tunnel during a collapse would come with keeping a close eye on climate factors like precipitation, which is a primary cause of tunnel collapses. Making it a point to avoid tunnel excursion during times of heavy rainfall increases the likelihood of survival and reduces the risk of collapse while being present in the tunnel. Another issue is the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning should a fire break out in the tunnel. The protective masks don't usually protect against smoke. Ethanol vapor inhalation, however, could provide some protection against carbon monoxide exposure. In a study involving rats, ethanol intoxication was found to have a protective effect against carbon monoxide poisoning. This idea can be applied underground if the ethanol, which is a flammable agent, is sealed safely away from any possible contact with incendiary materials or ignition factors. Flammable materials

are recommended to be stored in areas where there is strong ventilation. Underground structures, however, usually lack in this regard. The only workaround is for operatives to enter underground tunnels with alcohol in their system. The drawback of this is that the alcohol would contribute to reductions in judgment and reaction time in the event of a serious emergency. This is not the ideal state for anyone to be in during a risky mission, but it's the only way to safely make use of alcohol's protective effect against carbon monoxide poisoning in a poorly ventilated enclosed space. This also offers the idea that a trade off may be necessary, giving up some reaction time and judgment in exchange for extended time in the tunnels. Since alcohol correlates with a higher serum potassium, one can hypothesize that the higher serum potassium level in the body is what is exerting the protective effect against carbon monoxide poisoning. I would go as far as hypothesizing that higher levels of potassium in the body reduces the body's need for oxygen, that infact the higher the potassium concentration in someone's system may cause oxygen itself to become more toxic. If this is true, this could be a breakthrough allowing people to survive longer in tunnels. In any regard, certainly during the breaching process, ethanol vapors could be applied to breathing apparatuses. The importance of a workaround is mediated by the fact that personnel would be able to stay underground much longer. This would also help soldiers defending against an occupation remain hidden from enemy forces for much longer periods of time.

In the present day, the Middle East is perhaps the greatest example of how effective tunnels are against urban defenses. Beginning in late 2013, ISIS, using subterranean warfare, was able to lay siege and occupy large swaths of territory in Iraq and Syria before eventual US intervention in Iraq in 2014 and Russian intervention in Syria in 2015. Even after encountering numerous aerial bombardments by US and Russian Air Forces in Iraq and Syria respectively, ISIS has still managed to survive with the use of tunnels, even launching successful ambushes against Syrian regime forces, a midst their dwindling numbers, thus prolonging the conflict and effectuating an urgency for greater battlefield discipline. Back in 2016, during an Iraqi offensive to reclaim Mosul, ISIS was able to maintain a foothold on the city by developing a large network of tunnels there. The stealth that the tunnels provided allowed ISIS to hide from enemy forces. They were also able to identify the location of Iraqi and Kurdish forces with the use of drones. While hiding underground, ISIS was essentially able to use the drones to locate enemy positions, and then launch surprise attacks on them. Many of the armed forces around the world have recognized the threat and began making concessions to deal with the problem. Israel faces the greatest challenge of dealing with the threat of underground operations by enemy forces. Hezbollah and Hamas have both made

use of tunnel warfare and at numerous junctures, successfully infiltrated Israeli territory. Israel has bolstered their defense in response and used technology over the years to locate a number of cross border tunnels. The dangers of kidnappings, planting explosives, hostage taking, and all-out sieges are posed by effective use of underground tunnels, all of which will likely occur in Ukraine as insurgents attempt to reclaim territories from Russian invaders. In the West, many underground structures have been built, but mostly for drug smuggling and immigration purposes. There is at least an example of a tunnel being built for a bank robbery, which ended up failing due the collapse as a result of heavy rainfall. Part of the tunnel likely aligned with surface terrain comprised of dirt. When it rained, the water likely penetrated the soil and eroded the surrounding rock of the tunnel, causing it to collapse. It's probable in the future that attack tunnels will be built to align with surface concrete areas to reduce the risk of collapse from heavy rainfall.

Chapter 5: Material Support

Airstrikes and rocket launches are the number one cause of civilian casualties during military conflict. Major powers like the US, Russia, and Israel have extensive anti-missile and anti-aircraft systems to keep their populations safe. Russia's system is called the S-400. The US has what is called the Patriot missile system. And Israel has the famous Iron Dome system that has been a proven resource in shooting down thousands of rockets fired from Gaza and thus saving thousands of Israeli civilian lives. Ukraine, due to Russia's assault on the country with numerous airstrikes and rocket launches, will be forced to come up with a plan to develop its own missile defense system if they plan to recapture territories seized by Russia and the separatists in eastern and southern Ukraine. Ukraine will likely pursue a strategy that will harness the power of anti-aircraft and anti-missile, as well as evasive tactics such as subterranean warfare. If the United States plans to arm the Ukrainian military for an indefinite period of time without getting involved militarily in the conflict, they will have to become instrumental in facilitating the development of an underground weapons smuggling network, at least until Ukrainian air defense are adequate enough to shoot down Russian rockets and keep them from destroying the depots that store western weapons. Much in the way that Hamas is able to smuggle weapons underground via Egypt, Ukraine will likely need a similar underground apparatus to smuggle in western weapons via Poland.

Today's anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems use a tracking radar to intercept targets and are launched from missile batteries stationed on the ground. There are basically five components to the battery. The first is the actual missile. Then there is the launcher which holds the missile, aims it at the target and launches it. Also included is a radar antenna which detects incoming rockets, aircraft or missiles. All of this is controlled via a control center, usually situated inside of an equipment truck. There, the computers with the radar interface and consoles are manned by operators. Another component of the system is a power plant truck containing at least 2 150-kw generators responsible for providing power to the control center's radar and computer equipment. The anti-aircraft and anti-missile system differs from portable shoulder-fired missile launchers, in that the anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems use ground based radar to track the incoming missile and aircraft targets. The portable shoulder-fired missile launchers use infrared homing to track its targets. However, this method is easily evaded by aircraft that drop flares, which cause the infrared seeker to go off course and instead track the heat from the flares as opposed to the aircraft exhaust. When it comes to ground based radar missile systems, the radar can lock onto an incoming missile 50 miles away, before it's ever visible to

the human eye from the ground. Anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems have been upgraded over the years to detect other forms of aerial threats like ballistic missiles. They have also been developed with onboard radar systems that increase the ability of the missile to track its target. Because radar can be jammed with radio frequency signals, missiles with an onboard battery-powered radar can be programmed to switch to infrared homing in the event of its radar being jammed. Modern missile can fly at supersonic speeds. Equipped with frag warhead that explodes on impact, the 17 ft long missiles also carry a large fragmentation bomb with a proximity fuse that is set to detonate when in a certain range of the target aircraft or missile. The fragmentation bomb is the main component of Israel's Iron Dome system, allowing the IDF to stop Gaza missile in flight by firing missiles that explode in close proximity to the Gaza rockets, causing them to be destroyed in flight or knocked off their course. The new onboard radar transmitters and guidance systems built into the missiles allow them to make contact with the target before exploding, which destroys the target completely. The missile launchers, which are mounted on a truck for transport, can hold somewhere between 4 and 16 missiles. For example, a launcher in the US Patriot missile system has 4 launch canisters that hold 4 missiles each. The launcher is usually powered by the electric power plant vehicle that carries 2 150 kw generators. Israel's Iron Dome system has about 3 to 4 launchers, with each able to hold 20 Tamir interceptor missiles. Russia's s-400 system launcher has 4 canisters, with each able to hold 3 short range missiles. Typically around 90 soldiers are required to operate a missile defense battery, and operators must be present in the truck housing the radar interface and computer systems that controls and guides the missile system. The operators have access to every target picked up by the radar and sensors, and can choose to operate the system manually or let it run automatically. They are also responsible for communicating with the regional command center. The radar that is used to detect incoming targets can also gauge its trajectory, height, and speed. Once the radar, after scanning the skies, identifies the target as hostile and illuminates it, the missiles launched can then track the target, and the operators can properly aim the missile at the incoming aircraft or missile by calculating the intercept point, which is usually calculated based on the target's previous flight path indicated on the radar. The missile usually has an antenna on the nose which can provide further information on the incoming missile while in flight heading in the direction of the incoming missile. The information received by the antenna is then transmitted back to the command booth, where operators then use the information to recalculate the intercept point, adjust the guidance and send the guidance commands back to the missile which will then adjust the course of the missile and bring it closer to the target. Other

interceptor missiles have its own radar and computer systems built within it, allowing the missile to perform all the necessary calculations and guidance on its own. The speed of these missiles leave little margin for error. Also, the radar's software has to be optimized for detecting certain aerial objects, whether they be ballistic missiles, rockets/mortars, or aircraft/fighter jets. Algorithms are also applied to radar systems, which allows them to detect whether or not an aerial object is friendly or unfriendly. As of August 1st 2022, Russia has encountered a fierce Ukrainian counteroffensive powered by US HIMARS rockets. A number of these rockets have been able to evade Russia's air defense systems and some experts believe that Russia doesn't have the software to distinguish HIMARS rockets from grad rockets on its radar. This leaves Russia with a dilemma. Thus Ukraine, along with HIMARS rockets, can simply fire grad rockets from time to time and force Russia to fire more of their expensive air to air missiles that they would rather use against the HIMARS rockets. This will eventually drain Russia's supplies as they try to develop software for the radar that would allow it to distinguish HIMARS rockets from grad rockets.

A new development in anti-missile systems will involve the same technology that backs and powers self-driving cars. Whereas cameras/radars/sensors built into self-driving vehicles are used to help the car sense and navigate around people and other objects, those same cameras/radars/sensors built onto missiles will help missiles more easily ram into and strike incoming hostile aerial targets. Autonomous vehicles, also known as self-driving cars, uses cameras, sensors, and radars to track its own movements as well as the position and movements of surrounding objects and people so that the self-driving car can properly navigate without ramming into nearby people or objects. The major components of these autonomous vehicles are liDar, radar, and motion/object detection cameras. The radar used in self-driving vehicles comprises 2 types: Impulse and Frequency Modulated Continuous Wave(FMCW). The development of autonomous vehicles has been fostered by a great deal of ingenuity among some of the best technicians in the world, allowing the auto industry to evolve from human-controlled vehicles into an automated self-controlled ones. There is a huge race within the automobile industry to bring about the most efficient system of self-driving cars to the market. This task involves extensive research in sensor technology, motion detection, coding, AI, and radar systems. Self-driving cars rely on radar, liDar, and ultrasonic. These sensors allow the vehicle to operate without the guidance of a human and gives the vehicle the ability to identify and avoid colliding with impediments, objects and pedestrians in the immediate environment. This same technology used in rockets could be used for the exact opposite purpose—colliding with and destroying any objects or

impediments considered a hostile target. The technology behind self driving cars used in missile development will heighten the accuracy of missile strikes and anti-missile defense since object detection technology would have programs that would let the rocket maneuver towards the target without the need for the probability calculations used on current missile systems. Hypothetically, the bounding box used to identify a target object could be set to locate the angle point between the two missiles, allowing the interceptor missile to head straight for the angle point to meet and destroy the target missile or aircraft. This prospect would require advances in motion forecasting from liDar technology. Much of today's missile systems rely on calculating and predicting the trajectory of the target and locating the intercept point, but sometimes the prediction is wrong. Self-driving technology used in missile development greatly increases the likelihood that a missile will find its target. However, there also the possibility that hostile missiles with self-driving technology could be built to detect and evade incoming fire much in the way self-driving cars are made to evade people and things in the environment. Furthermore, the use of cameras as well as object and motion detection on missile systems will require quantum computing due to the hyper-sonic speeds at which missiles travel, making it to where detection and automated maneuvers will only have milliseconds to execute.

Missiles are maneuvered using an exhaust nozzle that can be swiveled from side to side. When the nozzle remains steady in the middle, the thrust remains along the center line of the missile, keeping the rocket on a straight path. When the nozzle is swiveled to the left the thrust line becomes inclined to the center line of the missile, creating an angle called the gimbal angle. Since the thrust is no longer passing thru the center line of the missile in this case, a torque is generated and causes the nose of the rocket to turn left. This is also what happens analogously when the nozzle is swiveled to the right, causing the nose of the missile to turn right. With self driving technology applied to missile systems, the nozzle can be automated to keep the missile in the position which keeps the onboard camera's object detection indicator fixated on the target. In self driving technology, the sensors are able to identify an object via a Raspberry Pi board attached with a pi camera module as well as an ultrasonic sensor responsible for data collection. A python program is then run on the Raspberry Pi, capturing the images from the pi camera and detecting the objects in it such as traffic signals(red or green light) and driving lanes. The ultrasonic sensors detect other obstacles in the path of the car. All the frames are cropped and modified into a numpy array. The images become properly labeled and the data is then put into a npz file before being generated onto an xml file, which would be loaded from the Raspberry pi once the car is started into

self-driving mode, allowing the car to detect objects based on the trained data. Thus when the car is put in motion, essentially the onboard camera begins capturing frames from the streaming video and then transmits them to the Raspberry Pi controller where the algorithm is able to identify the object and respond accordingly. For traffic light detection, the algorithm can detect whether the color is red or green and initialize the vehicle to stop at the light if its red and begin driving once the light turns green. Much of this technology in terms of simple code is readily available for numerous devices. Webcams on laptops can be turned into motion and object detection devices with simple html code, giving an intermediate user basic insight into the algorithms for motion and object detection. It is likely that missile detection would be developed using the Haar feature-based cascade classifier methodology that was explained in a paper written by Paul Viola and Michael Jones in 2001. This methodology is a form of machine learning in which a cascade function, or classifier, is developed by extracting features from positive and negative images. For instance, for face detection, it takes both a decent number of positive images which contain actual faces and a decent number of negative images which are images that would not have faces, in order to develop an algorithm for being able to detect faces. For better accuracy, it often takes hundreds to thousands of positive and negative images as well as strong computing power. The next step is extracting features from the images, and this is done with cascading windows called haar filters which contain both black and white rectangles placed over different parts of the image. The features extracted are calculated by subtracting the sum of the pixels under the white portion of the haar filter from the sum of the pixels under the black portion of the haar filter. This process identifies aspects of the image in relation to other parts of the image, i.e. for example if the region of the eyes is normally darker than the nose and cheek areas. Or if the eye region is darker than the bridge of the nose. This data helps the algorithm distinguish between and classify faces and non-faces. This process is what is called training the images and once complete, the vector data is generated onto an xml file. This training process can be done with any objects, including rockets and aircraft. And much in the way self driving cars use all these features to make itself run, likewise, on a missile, a Raspberry Pi board could be attached with a pi camera module and an ultrasonic sensor for collecting input data. Positive images of any target missile, along with negatives images that don't contain the target missile can be trained, with the data containing the extracted features generated onto an xml file. An example would be Ukraine taking hundreds of images of the Russian kh-22 missile that struck the Kredmash factory and adjacent Amstor mall back in June and training both the positive and negative images so that a kh-22 missile could be detected by the onboard

camera of the interceptor missile. Whenever a kh-22 missile would be fired, the anti-missile system radar would detect the incoming missile and fire its own missile to intercept the target. The interceptor missile could theoretically have onboard a raspberry Pi controller with the xml file pretrained to classify the target missile—a kh-22 missile in this case. In flight, the algorithm would be able to identify the kh-22 missile, while the lidar and radar system built into the missile would determine the range. The cameras on the missile would locate the kh-22 and track it with the bounding box, with the missile nozzle automatically programmed to swivel accordingly in a manner that directs its path towards the target, possibly by being set to maneuver in a way that keeps the bounding box set in a static position. Another possibility is technology where an algorithm would enable the onboard camera to detect the angle point between the interceptor missile and the trajectory of the target missile, allowing the interceptor missile to meet the target at that point and destroy it. This will require advances in lidar technology and its motion forecasting abilities. Open CV is a popular cross-platform library that allows programmers to train their own classifiers for any object. Ukrainian researchers have likely already developed pre-trained classifiers generated as xml files to detect Russian missiles.

Typical of operations throughout the war in Ukraine is the methodology of sending out UAVs to locate enemy positions and then firing artillery based on that information. Daily Russian shelling is double the amount of Ukrainian shelling, and when it comes to targeting fixed positions, Russia has proven to be very effective in that regard. In fact, it has been able to offset Russia's poor ground performance. Russia's weakness in ground performance is one area that Ukraine will try to exploit, which is what they attempted to do in Sievierodonetsk. But in order to trap Russian forces into an urban or ground war, it will require being able to neutralize Russia's vast artillery. Repeated bombardments from Russian artillery has displaced Ukrainian forces, and forced them to abandon their positions, which has kept them from mobilizing enough troops to conduct a counterattack. This was the advantage that Russia had in the east, as compared to the west in places like Kyiv where Russia's artillery units had been stationed behind friendlies operating further east. This disadvantage is why Ukrainian forces had more success against Russian troops in western Ukraine than they had or would have in eastern Ukraine. As stated before, proximity to supply lines is key, but advancing artillery units to new consolidation points is easier said than done. For Ukraine it is even more difficult because of Russia's long range missile systems which can strike weapons depots from hundreds of kilometers away. Still and all, with Ukraine putting up a fierce resistance with the new HIMARS rocket systems, Russia has yet to employ its upgraded arsenal of weapons which are more

technological advanced than their older systems. The problem is the technical expertise needed to operate them. Russia has technology in which fire control would be mediated through a communications systems called ISTAR that would allow artillery tactical groups to receive in real-time the positions of enemy targets, to which then artillery units could direct the gunfire of multiple artillery stations and also provide support to other units on the battlefield. There is also a shorter response time to incoming fires. However, this type of communications system requires expertise that Russia currently has a shortage of. Also, these communication systems require high levels of encryption, another shortage that Russia is facing as far as having the equipment that can keep communications secure. Many of the senior leaders in Russia's tactical Battalion groups have been communicating with unencrypted communication devices like cellphones. Notwithstanding, Russia has been able to overcome this hurdle by deploying more and more artillery and munitions to the battlefield. The shortage of ISTAR equipment operators and the resulting shorter response time to Ukrainian artillery fires has allowed Ukrainian tactical units to evade Russia's artillery response. Ukraine has also at times been able to implement successful artillery fires with ISTAR coordination with the use of UAVs.

There are still large stockpiles of artillery from the Soviet era that Russia can draw from, not to mention the capability to mass production to go along with it. Between the 1980s and 2014, Ukraine's factories were providing Russia with 2000000 152-mm howitzers annually. Hence why Russia is firing these shells at roughly three times the amount that Ukraine is on a daily basis during the war. Russia also has a larger arsenal of guided-missile systems. Aside from the HIMARS rockets, the vast majority of Ukraine's missile systems are unguided. However, this disparity is somewhat offset by the fact that Russia has a shortage of operators trained to direct their guided missile system, which is why Ukraine has seen Russia launch laser guided missiles without aiming the laser at the target. Russia normally positions their artillery units behind the front line personnel based on the range of the artillery. Those systems with higher range tend to be situated further back than those artillery systems that fire at a more medium range. There is some improvisation allowed in which artillery would be moved forward in cases of getting a target within reach. Batteries, which are all the components of a missile system—the vehicle its mounted to, the men operating it, as well as the computer booth and the containers from which the missiles are fired, are stationed in an area that spans 100 by 300 meters, with roughly 40 meters of space between each gun. The Multiple Launch Rocket Systems(MLRS) are positioned along a line with each MLRS being 150 meters apart. Some of the missile batteries have fragmented into separate units that would support

Battalion Tactical Groups(BTGs) whose mobility and information on enemy targets is being supplied via UAV reconnaissance. This improvisation by Russia's forces has been effective in firing upon Ukrainian positions with greater accuracy. Russia has also employed decoys made up of damaged artillery and maybe one working artillery piece to give off the impression of being operable. Thus Ukraine would fire upon the dummy artillery, allowing Russia to locate their position and launch return fire. Ultimately the MLRS are used to deter Ukrainian forces from advancing into certain areas. The howitzers, on the other hand, are aimed for the purpose of striking a target.

When it comes to countering Ukrainian artillery, the artillery units with longer range missiles, such as the Tochka-U missiles, which are further behind the front lines usually carry out the task. After UAV(drones) reconnaissance locates the target, Russian artillery crews are able to strike it within 3 to 5 minutes of receiving that information. Other reconnaissance tools are nowhere near as effective. There are Electronic Warfare (EW) systems, recon tools that rely on sound, as well as radar from the artillery. None of these are as effective as UAV. When using those other tools, it takes half an hour before the target is accurately struck. With UAVs, it takes on average 3 to 5 minutes. To counter this, Ukraine has deployed specialized teams called MANPADS that use shoulder launched precision guided surface to air missiles that track and destroy UAVs and other reconnaissance tools. If UAVs maintain surveillance over its target even as the target is moving, Russian artillery units can then concurrently adjust their aim.

The use of cell phones during the Russia/Ukraine war had led to numerous casualties. In many cases, entire platoons have been wiped out because one person turned on their cell phone, which gave away his location. The presence of cell phone towers in Ukraine has allowed Ukraine to detect the location of Russian military personnel who are using cell phones to communicate. Cell phones are often used when other communication equipment breaks down and we see in Ukraine an example of how the use of cell phones works against battlefield operations. Ukraine has been able to kill a number of Russian generals by locating their cell phone signal from the Ukrainian cellular network. Russia, on the other hand, is able to locate cell phone signals of Ukrainian soldiers with a Leer-3 electronic warfare system that is comprised of two drones that have IMSI catchers, along with a command truck operating below. Russia's EW system can track roughly 2,000 phones inside of a 3.7-mile range. IMSI catchers are fake cell phone towers that can detect cell phone locations within a certain radius. With IMSI, the exact location of the phone of interest can be pinpointed via triangulating signal strengths from nearby cell towers. Keep in mind that when a cell phone is

turned on, it sends out a roaming signal, which is picked up by a cellular network, either the IMSI or Ukraine's cellular network. When Ukraine's cellular network detects a signal from the cell phone of a Russian soldier, Ukrainian operators can find that soldier's position by triangulating using the three closest cell towers. In triangulating using the mobile cellular network and cell towers, the signal strength between the phone and the tower can determine how far away from the cell tower the phone is. Using three cell towers to determine distance of the phone from each tower allows one to pinpoint the location. From this methodology, Ukrainian forces can get the ID of the phone, the roaming number, as well as the exact location. When Russian soldiers stole the I-phones of Ukrainian soldiers, the Russian soldiers were able to be tracked with the Find My I-phone app. One person using the app demonstrated on Instagram the app tracking the movements of retreating Russian soldiers from Kyiv to Belarus to Belgorod. It is also possible to ping the GPS system of a device in order to get its location. Nearly all modern cell phones have a GPS receiver built into them. The reason the Russians don't target and destroy the cell towers is because much of their equipment, even the IMSI catchers, rely on high speed 4G and 5G wifi. While GPS is effective at locating enemy targets, there are ways to obstruct their ability to do so. The methods that can be used to obstruct the location-finding abilities of drones using IMSI catchers, involve using radio emitters to jam the GPS signal of the drone and prevent it from receiving any GPS signal. There is also a technique called GPS spoofing which uses a radio transmitter to disrupt the drone's ability to verify its accurate location. There are, however, workarounds to these spoofing and jamming systems, and some GPS validation systems have already been deployed during the war in Ukraine. The US military also has its own anti-jamming, anti-spoofing GPS validation system called M-Code, which if supplied to Ukraine would have a profound effect on Ukraine's capability to fight against Russia. Another method of tracking the location of cell phones is through the delivery of spyware. Hamas has tried this against Israeli soldiers. They would pose as beautiful women on social media for the purpose of luring soldiers into downloading malicious software which can track the exact location of the device.

There are a number of things that can be extrapolated from cell phone location. It gives clues into supply routes, bases, and troop movements, as well as strategy. Russia has used its UAVs with IMSI catchers to spy on NATO countries in years past, attempting to see if the number of troops at NATO bases was the actual number that NATO stated they would have present there. When it comes to mitigating the danger that arises with having a cell phone on the battlefield, the only major consensus regarding it advises banning the use of them altogether. But even still, there are cases of generals

seizing the cell phones of their own troops who don't want to conform to the safety protocol. Some platoons have a policy in which they require that personnel using their cell phones have to do it over 1000 ft away from their platoon location. Taliban leaders would evade being targeted for assassination by swapping out sim cards with other people at different locations. Another evasive tactic is the use of Faraday cases which blocks wireless signals to electronic devices. With a Faraday case, a person can head in the wrong direction purposely in order to fool the trackers and then simply put his phone in the Faraday case, blocking its signal, and then head back in the right direction, thereby faking out the operator trying to locate his position.

When it comes to counter-battery fire, Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) can simply be relocated to evade the strike. Howitzers, however, cannot. In the event of counter artillery fire, those soldiers operating the howitzers have to take cover and leave the howitzers in place. In some cases, the howitzers can be repaired. After counter artillery fire, the MLRS is usually not moved back to its original spot, but is relocated to a different position within the same vicinity of the former one. Also, the battery that is being targeted by artillery fire is usually not the one that launches counter artillery. This process is facilitated by what is called the AKATSIA fire-control architecture, which assigns counter fire procedures to batteries not being targeted. Tochka-U missiles are typically used for these operations. Their long range capabilities allows Russia to target Electronic Warfare systems and command posts that are at the rear and far behind the front lines of enemy forces. These aspects of Russia's arsenal have it made it difficult for Ukraine to launch a successful counter offensive. However, when it comes to logistics, Russia is at a huge disadvantage, moreso now that Ukraine has precision guided HIMARS rockets that can destroy Russian supply routes and keep Russia from building upon and consolidating positions further west. The obstacles that come with transportation as a result of this could work in Ukraine's favor.

At the beginning of the war, Russia face difficulty is making use of rail lines to bring ammunition to the front lines. In order to circumvent this problem, they begin transporting ammo from the rail heads to the rear and then to ammunition depots stationed behind their operating artillery units. From there, the munitions are then transported to the artillery units via civilian vehicles which cannot travel in off-road conditions. They have to remain on roads. This process of moving ammunition is very predictable and in some cases impossible to defend. But Ukraine's lack of highly advanced long range artillery keeps them from being able to exploit this weakness of Russia's logistics. This is one of the handicaps that Ukraine has to deal with—Russia has the capability to strike Ukraine's rear area

operations, but Ukraine lacks the capacity to fire upon Russia's rear area. However, Ukraine seems to have been able to employ saboteurs within Russia's army to do the job. A number of Russian ammunition depots were blown up just before Ukraine's Kherson counteroffensive in late August. Still and all, Ukraine has managed to receive MLRS systems from Germany and the UK in early August, which have the capacity of striking targets at 186 miles away. These systems should effectively reduce the scale of continuous Russian artillery bombardments and help Ukraine further advance into eastern territories. In combination with more 152mm howitzers, Ukraine will also be able to increase their ability to provide support to its mobile units. NATO however has expressed concern with their ability to keep manufacturing up to par with Ukraine's equipment losses in the battlefield. Furthermore, another issue when it comes to the supply of howitzers from different western nations, is that each type of howitzer has a different operational standard and require different training and expertise. The shells compatible with one type of howitzer is incompatible with another type. This presents a logistical problem for Ukraine, and makes it imperative for them to be supplied abundantly with one type of howitzer so that maintenance of those systems can be more adequately sustained.

Ukraine's success, as far as military is concerned, will depend on their ability to attack the rear of the Russian forces, as well as the logistical aspects of their ammunition transport. This would require the efficient use of UAVs, Electronic Warfare systems, and long range precision missile systems. However, Russia's Electronic Warfare Systems have been able to determine that Ukraine's ability to locate and strike the position of Russia's forces with the combined use of UAV(drones) and other artillery and communications equipment is reliant on signals received via US operated space based GPS satellites. In order to obstruct this ability, Russia employed their Pole-21 jamming system, as well as their automatic jamming system called the R330Zh. They also have a UAV called the Orlan-10 which is part of their EW system that can jam cell towers and suppress mobile communications. The US, however, has an anti-jamming, anti-spoofing GPS validation system called M-Code, which they could supply to Ukraine to help them evade Russia's GPS jamming systems. The only country outside the US that received M-CODE is Germany. However, there is somewhat of a catch-22 when it comes to jamming systems, and Russia has to temporarily turn off their jamming systems in order to make use of their own GPS-based positioning and targeting of Ukrainian forces. Russia also relies on landlines to communicate. These are cables laid on the ground and are much safer for communicating without giving away one's position. Ukrainian forces also made effective use of these during the war in Donbass prior to February 24 2022. Moreover, when it comes to the use of

jamming and spoofing systems, a great deal of fuel is required, and this why devices like the Pole-21 and R330Zh are not always used. Russia also has another jamming and spoofing system that is mounted on a truck. It's called the Shipovnik-Aero and can detect UAVs by analyzing the UAV's control frequency, as well as obstruct various communications networks. After confirming the control frequency, the Shipovnik-Aero can then jam the command frequency. It also spoofs the UAVs navigational system, disrupting its ability to accurately verify its location, to the point that the person operating the UAV may think he is directing it back to the base, but in reality the drone is actually going to a location designated by the Shipovnik-Aero spoofing system. The Shipovnik-Aero's jamming system has restricted Ukraine's ability to monitor certain areas, but if Ukraine is able to locate and destroy it, it would be of strategic significance to Ukraine. Because of the time it takes to set up the Shipovnik-Aero, it becomes increasingly vulnerable to being struck by Ukrainian artillery. Still and all, when it comes to Russia's capabilities, where jamming and spoofing isn't used to target Ukrainian UAVs, other forms of attacks have been able to neutralize the threat. Russia has fired its howitzers, MLRS and Tochka-U at UAV operators. Altogether, in lieu of the various systems designed to defend against UAVs, the Ukrainian UAVs usually lasts on average roughly seven days. Ukraine has considered only sending UAVs out on a pre-set flight plan to lower the risk of losing the UAV, at the expense of being able to more quickly locate, target, and destroy enemy targets. It was found that setting UAVs on a pre-set flight path helped it avoid serious obstruction from EW systems, while UAVs set to fly with via an operator faced more interference from Electronic Warfare systems.

It has been noted that Russian forces rarely disembark from areas they can obscure from Ukraine's reconnaissance equipment and missile capabilities. If Ukraine had the US military's anti-jamming and anti-spoofing M-Code system, they could gain a greater capability to strike those Russian positions. While the Starlink satellite has helped Ukraine maintain GPS surveillance on the battlefield, Russia every now and then is able to disrupt satellite networks. Russia's ground based EW systems are extensive and have multiple capabilities like jamming, spoofing, and locating. The TORN-MDM, another ground based EW system, can use triangulation to locate troops communicating with a radius of 70 kilometers. They can also simultaneously decrypt the communications of the Motorola radios used by Ukrainian forces. (Harris radios are said to be more secure and impervious to EW systems.) Ukrainian forces managed to capture a TORN-MDM system early during the war.

When it comes to ground based warfare, Russia has been at a disadvantage. Despite facing issues on this front in prior wars and also improvising in those same wars, Russia managed to repeat

similar mistakes at the outset of their invasion of Ukraine. Russia organizes their infantry into BTGs or Battalion Tactical Groups. However once again, it took massive casualties for them to realize that the most effective methodology of conducting ground assaults is with the use of storm teams as well as ground infantry moving alongside of armored vehicles in order to prevent ambushes. Ukraine on the other hand is prevented from taking advantage of any weakness in Russia's ground based troops because repeated bombardments by Russian artillery often keeps Ukrainian forces from forming into anything greater than a company comprised of 200 soldiers, and the sheer volume of Russian artillery gives them an advantage when it comes to fighting over a broader area. At the start of the Kherson counter offensive in late August of 2022, soldiers wounded in the battle reported the scale of Russian artillery in comparison to theirs and estimated that Ukrainian troops were being killed at a ratio of 5:1. For every five Ukrainian troops killed, there was only one Russian troop killed. Despite the disadvantage, Ukrainian forces made gains, recapturing villages along several axes in Kherson. They also captured territories across the Siverskyi Donets River in Donetsk Oblast. The initial feint operation that the Kherson counteroffensive was designated to be, had the intended effect of putting Ukraine in position to attack Russia's logistical capabilities, as well getting Russian forces to commit more troops towards Kherson. Russia began to shift more of its forces from Kharkiv and eastern Ukraine to Ukraine's south in the Kherson region. This was done to reinforce Russian positions there since Kherson is of paramount strategic importance for Russia's hold on Crimea. However, it left an opening for Ukraine to advance into Kharkiv, which they did successfully on September 6th 2022, capturing Verbivka and chasing the Russian forces back to the left bank of the Severskyi Donets and Serednya Balakliika rivers. Subsequently, Russia would destroy a number of bridges in Balakliya to prevent Ukraine from going further east.

One of the main advantages Russia has is its ability to strike deep inside Ukrainian territory with long range ballistic missiles. This is why some feel that the f35 or f16s will not be enough for Ukraine to counter this particular Russian advantage. This capability of the Russian military prevents Ukraine from embarking upon sustained manufacturing of defense equipment, and Russia can resort to using ballistic missiles whenever they see fit. Continuous strikes as far as Kyiv would demoralize the population and stifle attempts at recovery. The most devastating long range missile that Russia has is the Iskander-M quasi-ballistic missile which can evade air defense systems with its ability to maneuver in flight. While in flight heading towards the target, the Iskander-M quasi-ballistic missile can disperse emitters that confuses radar systems as to the trajectory of

the missile, making it all the more harder for anti-missile defense systems to track and destroy it. The emitters are small objects the size of a coca-cola can, but when they are dispensed by the missile, they can help distort the trajectory of the missile and thus alter the radar readings and subsequent trajectory calculations. Russia usually saves these for a potential conflict with NATO forces in the event of a full scale Russia/NATO war.

In Ukraine, Russia has used cruise missiles to strike targets, missiles such as the 9M727, Kh-101, Kh-59, and 3M-54. The 9M727 can be fired using the Iskander launcher. The Kh-101 is normally fired from Russian bombers. The Kh-59 are usually launched from the ground, while the 3M-54 is launched from vessels in the Black Sea. The 9M727 and Kalibr missiles are subsonic and travel low in order to avoid being detected by radar from anti-missile systems. Russia also uses E95M air targets to train its anti-aircraft crews. Many of Russia's missiles are evasive with high maneuverability, such that its very difficult to predict their trajectory since the missile can change direction while in flight. It has been recommended that Ukraine should set up its air raid alert equipment over a vast area in order to account for the maneuverability of Russia's missiles. It is often the case in Ukraine that air raid sirens are so often, that in many cases they simply are ignored by the general population.

Russia's missiles have guidance systems built into them. The missiles use built-in sensors to help direct their flight. Russia's missiles have imaging technology that allows the missile to compare footage from real time imaging with pre-loaded mapping. Other missiles have built-in radar and components for receiving satellite signals. If these signals are jammed, the missile has other components that would allow its position to be detected. For this, Russian missiles have an inertial navigation system (INS) comprised of accelerometers which measure translation and gyroscopes that measure rotation, both of which allow for the position of the missile to be determined. Essentially, after the initial orientation is provided by the GPS, the INS—if the GPS signal from the missile is later jammed—can help operators calculate the position of the missile from information provided by the onboard gyroscopes, accelerometers and other motion sensors. That information is combined with the initial orientation in order to calculate the missile's current position. This method is jam proof. However, even in light of the prospect of jamming, Russia's ballistic missiles rely on GPS for satellite navigation since it is believed that other countries will always allow GPS signals on their territory. When it comes to Russian missiles that fly low and at subsonic speeds, Ukrainian forces are able to alert gunner units when a missile has just flew by, preparing them in advance to shoot down the missile. This has proven effective for Ukrainian forces, who have been able to shoot down a number of

Russian missiles with their own air-defense systems. Furthermore, for Ukraine to make serious advances militarily, it will require for them to be supplied with long range missile systems like the Army Tactical Missile Systems(ATACMS) which can reach as far as 300 kilometers. Such a weapon would allow Ukraine to strike far behind Russia's front lines and destroy Russian ammunition depots and ammo transport equipment. Another factor that would work in Ukraine's favor if they received the ATACMS is that it could raise the likelihood of being able to recapture separatist held territory. One of the reasons that the separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk were able to hold on to those territories for as long as they have is because in 2014 they were successful in driving Ukrainian forces off of their post at the Izvaryne border connecting Luhansk and Russia. Consequently, Russia was able to bring in weapons and reinforcements into the separatist territories via the Izvaryne border crossing to aid the separatists against the Ukrainian government forces. Without recapturing or launching strikes at the Izvaryne border crossing and repelling incoming artillery from the Russian Federation, Ukraine will have no means of neutralizing the separatist threat in Luhansk and Donetsk and no way of securing the region back into Ukrainian control. This is why long range missile systems would make a significant difference in Ukraine's ability to keep morale and faith among its own troops very high because troops would have more confidence in their mission to recapture all of Ukraine.

The other game-changer would be if Ukraine's military could get its hands on the US military's M-CODE anti-jamming and anti-spoofing system. This combined with ATACMS would give Ukraine the capability to conduct more reconnaissance and locate enemy targets at long range. Ukrainian UAVs would be able to maintain its command link with operators without the elevated risk of jamming and interference from Russia's EW systems.

The US has also sent radar hunting missiles called (HARM) which gives Ukraine the capability to take out Russia's radar sites. The HARM missiles can be fired from Ukraine's MIG-29 fighter jets and would give Ukrainian forces a great advantage in their counteroffensive. The US has used HARM missiles in the past in wars against Iraq. The missiles work by detecting radar emissions.

Chapter 6: Lessons from the Russia/Chechnya War

The wave of nationalistic sentiment, feeling as though one is justified is not always a formula for military success. It can help garner support, as we see in the case of Ukraine, but in most cases, it has no bearing on the outcome of conflict. Like Ukraine, both Chechnya and Georgia, following the breakup of the Soviet Union, felt it was their right to extract itself from Russia's sphere of influence, but in both cases, Russia bulldozed its way through such sentiments of justification and resistance of Russian influence and ultimately carved out Russian territory in both countries. Chechnya is now part of the Russian federation. On account of that, it's one thing to be confident about victory for Ukraine, it's another to see it from a realistic perspective. Russia is facing a situation in Ukraine that heavily mirrors what occurred in Georgia and Chechnya prior to Russian intervention—oppression and hostile treatment of ethnic Russians. Such was Russia's justification to intervene militarily in both of those countries, and was also Russia's justification to intervene in Ukraine. Historically, Ukraine has only existed as a truly neutral state in 1990s under the presidency of Kuchma after the fall of the Soviet Union. In years prior, Ukraine was either under the protection of Russia as it was the case when Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Ukraine's founder, made Ukraine a protectorate of the Russian empire in the 1600s—And—when the Soviet Union took control of Ukraine following the Bolshevik Revolution. When Ukraine was not under Russian control, it was usually occupied by German forces both during World War I and World War II. Hence, why Ukraine has to make its goals clear—do they want to be under the influence of Germany or the influence of Russia. Or do they want to be neutral? If they make themselves a protectorate of the west, then Ukraine will have to concede to western notions regarding the western view of democracy and also western insistence on civic nationalism, not ethnic nationalism, a prospect that would be a huge blow to Ukrainian nationalism. But as a neutral state, even with just 80% of its territory, Ukrainian nationalism would thrive like no other. If Ukraine places itself under western jurisdiction, then Ukraine must see that such an investment pays off—a payoff that would ensure the return of all Russian occupied areas of the country, but this would require Ukraine eventually allowing foreign forces to operate on its soil and essentially control the political paradigm there. At the moment, the west is only providing weapons to Ukraine, and such may not be enough for Ukraine to reclaim territory from Russia. One way for Ukraine to reclaim territories from Russian occupation would be for regime change to occur in Russia, and not just a smooth transition of regime change. It would have to be the type of regime change that is marked by major upheaval akin to the Bolshevik revolution and the

fall of the Soviet Union. In both cases, the economic situation was a major catalyst behind the revolutions and independence movements. But following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, worldwide sanctions against Russia failed to trigger a cathartic situation in Russia that would provoke unrest. In fact, it has done the opposite. Russia's economy and currency actually remained stable. The Ruble, after a brief decline, rose in value shortly thereafter and had become one of the strongest currencies of the year in 2022. Because of this positive outcome for Russia, if Ukraine is trying to trigger regime change in Russia, they will have to devise a new strategy. If we look back at fall of the Russian empire and the fall of the Soviet Union, there are some intricacies that run concurrent with the similarity pertaining to the economic fallback that helped trigger the collapse of both regimes. Obviously, the fall of the Russian empire was largely due to economic inequalities where the common folks were living in dire poverty, while high-ranking officials lived in luxury. This is the same dynamic that led to the French Revolution in the 18th century. Fast forward to the fall of Soviet Union in 1991, not only was the economy in dire straights—likely due to excessive subsidization of industries by the Soviet government, a far left General Secretary in Mikhail Gorbachev come to power in the Soviet Union and upended all the main tenets of Soviet politics which kept it going, such as restriction of speech, vote for one party, etc. Mikhail Gorbachev did away with such restrictions and the people of the Soviet Union didn't respond with gratitude, thinking it was a conciliatory gesture in order to elicit a positive view of the Soviet Union, the Soviet states took it literally as a license to go independent. So in looking back at the fall of both regimes—Russian empire collapse and Soviet Union collapse, how does one conjure up what would have to occur in Russia to trigger total Russian collapse, allowing Ukraine to quickly seize its former territories.

On August 9th, 2022, the Ukrainian army may have struck a Russian airbase in Crimea apparently with its own long range missiles capable of reaching targets over 200km away. However, there was still some speculation over where Ukraine got the missiles. Did they in fact produce them or were they secretly supplied by the United States or the United Kingdom? Anyhow, the result garnered Ukraine some affirmation on their continued insistence that they have the capability to drive out Russian forces from Ukrainian territories. Driving home the point that such is a likely scenario aids the Ukrainian war machine, the continued supply of foreign weapons, and the prospect of weakening and depleting Russia's military infrastructure. Proving the viability of a Ukrainian military operation, not just to western allies, but also to Russian officials could foster urgency among Russian officials to negotiate a peace treaty that gives some concessions to terms laid forth by Ukraine. On August 9th, nine

Russian warplanes were completely destroyed at the Saky Airbase in Crimea in what would mark a major turning point in the current trajectory of the war, a trajectory of which Russia would comfortably occupy much of the east and south of Ukraine. The strike at Saky Airbase was the first major Ukrainian attack on a Russian base near the Black Sea, and also on territory that Russia considers to belong to Russia. Russian annexed Crimea in 2014 after a referendum. Moreover, the reports of the explosions perplexed some of those following the war, considering that one would presume that Russia would have some sort of anti-missile shield protecting the airbase. While much was presumed that Ukraine did indeed carry out the attack, the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, did not outright claim responsibility for the attack, only pointing out the damage that occurred at the Russian airbase. Shortly before, though, Zelenskyy pointed out to western media the dangers of revealing vital Ukrainian strategic maneuvers. Hence, why it is likely that Ukraine may become more discreet regarding their tactical achievements. Russia denied that Ukraine carried out the attack, saying that negligence caused the explosions. Furthermore, when the topic of HIMARS was brought up as a potential weapon used by the Ukrainians to attack the base, experts noted that HIMARS rockets only have a max range of 120km. The Saky Airbase is around 225km from the front lines. The US supplied HIMARS rockets could not reach that far. In other strategic maneuvers, Ukraine is also blowing up the bridges over the Dnieper river, leaving Russia possibly having to rely on ferries in order to get supplies to troops stationed just west of the Dnieper. However, that may be unfeasible for Russia and will thus leave those Russian troops trapped in some areas just west of the Dnieper at the mercy of Ukrainian artillery. There are also apparently pro-Ukrainian Russian sympathizers conducting sabotage operations, blowing up Russian ammunition depots on behalf of Ukraine. Some Ukrainian sources reported to the New York Times that some Ukrainian sympathizers operating in the Russian military orchestrated the attack. No one is sure of the origin of these infiltrators, whether or not if they are in fact sympathizers or trained by a foreign intelligence service. Zelenskyy has been very discreet about the recent attacks on Russian territories in Crimea, choosing to avoid saying outright that Ukraine carried out the attack or confirm that some infiltrators launched the operation from behind enemy lines. This is very wise since admitting infiltration into Russian territory could allow Russia to orchestrate a pretext to justify further escalating the conflict. Still and all, recent Ukrainian successes will further aid Zelenskyy's ability to persuade western nations for more supplies and aid. Russia will likely conduct provocations in Latin America in order to get the US to focus its foreign policy there. Such provocations could include Russian sending warships to Nicaragua or

supplying Latin countries with long range missile systems, all of which would provoke the US, but force them to shift their focus closer to home—a prospect that would be huge loss for Ukraine on the supply front.

A major concern for the international community has the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power plant that currently under the control of the Russian army. The dilemma that surrounds the plant is how the nature of the conflict requires Russian military personnel to remain present near the plant. At the same time, it turns the nuclear plant into a target that Ukraine can fire missiles at. If Russia agrees to a demilitarization of the plant, Ukrainian forces can advance and reclaim it since it is still internationally recognized as Ukrainian territory. The IAEA had gone to the site of plant to conduct an inspection but has not singled out any one side as far as endangering it. If the something were to occur, a missile strike that hits the building that holds the reactors would lead to a radiation leak. Much of the concern is about the water systems used to cool the spent fuel pools and the reactors. If those are damaged, heat would build up and radiation would be released into the air. Because of the location of the power plant, all of Europe would be affected by the radiation leak if the power plant were to be significantly damaged from the shelling

Ukraine has a lot of confidence that it can overcome the largest military force in eastern Europe. A recent example in eastern Europe of how a smaller nation can attain its objective against the aggression of a larger force can be seen from how the first Chechen war played out, leading to Russia withdrawing troops from the country after a 2 year battle between 1994 and 1996. Chechnya was led by Dzhokhar Dudayev, and during his tenure, there was much unrest stemming from his treatment of ethnic Russians and Ukrainians living there, as well as his administrative policy, which led to opposition and separatist entities that would be supported by Russia. Many Chechens disapproved of Dudayev's policies and initially welcomed Russian intervention and their support of Dudayev opposition factions. Hence why when opposition forces and Russian troops advanced into Grozny, they expected nothing more than having to display a show of force in order to get Dudayev's forces to surrender, considering that it did not take long for Russia to wipe out Chechnya's air force. Dudayev's forces were largely unequipped to confront the Russian army, but their knowledge of the terrain and use of the infrastructure would shortly thereafter create massive problems for the Russian army as Chechen forces would launch a guerrilla operation that would confuse the Russian occupiers. They made use of basements and underground tunnels to hide their movements from Russian surveillance equipment, and Chechens were also reinforced with the aid of more soldiers and equipment coming from Moscow to help them, often sneaking into Chechnya from Ingusheta. Russia's

unpreparedness was attributed to the lack of experience by ground troops who were ordered to maintain military protocols that were often hard to adhere to in the heat of battle—protocols such as not to shoot unless shot at first. Many of the Russian troops were said to be untrained for urban warfare, having been used to the old Soviet style of fighting when Red Army troops fought in battles in which urban areas were left open for the sake of keeping the infrastructure in tact. Historically, much of Russia's wars are heavily defined by an initial learning phase resulting in large casualties followed by an adaptation that leads to a successful counter offensive. This was the case in World War II, as Russia struggled to claim east Poland, Finland, and later its own territory from German occupation. This also looks to be the case in Ukraine when shortly after their move into Kiev, Russia was met with an unexpected and powerful Ukrainian resistance. All of this is very similar to the Russian advance into Grozny in 1994, where Chechen guerrilla units, often made up of small teams dispersed throughout a city, with units comprised of men carrying shoulder launched RPGs, assault weapons, and sniper rifles. For the Russian army, there was a slight mishap that would lead to Russia having to concede on the battlefield to Chechen forces. Much of the initial military personnel that had been deployed during the adaptation and improvisation process during the first year of the Chechen war, having knowledge of what went wrong and what needed to be corrected, did not pass that knowledge to incoming personnel sent to Grozny after the initial military personnel were eventually relieved from duty after serving their term and sent home. The training applied for the incoming inexperienced soldiers was not sufficient enough for application in real time in urban combat situations. Hence why Islamic forces in Chechnya became instrumental in carrying out attacks that would wipe out over a thousand Russian troops later on in the war—Chechen forces became split between secularists and jihadists. In looking back, in this case of the first Chechen war, we see how Russian troops initially encountered significant losses amid Chechen guerrilla and subterranean warfare tactics, but later adapted to the urban warfare and stifled the Chechen resistance. This process in itself was the training exercise for Russia because shortly thereafter, Russia then began improvising and making use of unmanned remote controlled armored vehicles. They also began letting experienced Russian troops initiate ground advances, while having the less experienced troops advance from another direction.

Strategically, as we see often in modern warfare, using civilian areas as human shields helped the Chechens enormously, such that without the tactic it is likely that the Chechens would not have staved off the Russian occupation. In addition to making use of civilian areas, Chechen fighters would also move tanks that they seized from Russian soldiers and plant them inside basements, firing them from

there so that Russia would strike the house or residential area and kill civilians, allowing Chechen fighters to show to the media how insidious Russian tactics are. Chechen urban tactics were textbook tactics now used by insurgencies in the middle east. Interestingly, the Ukraine war has raised some questions as to whether or not defensive armies should be allowed to use civilian areas for strategic purposes.

Another aspect that helped the Chechen factions initially stave off the Russian advance during the first Chechen War was their ability to seize Russian radios and intercept Russian communications. This was extremely vital and allowed Chechen fighters to know in advance where Russian forces were moving, allowing the Chechens to conduct successful ambush attacks. Russia, however, later figured out how to better encrypt their communications; they also figured out ways to lure Chechen fighters suspecting Russian unawareness and then wipe out the Chechen fighters upon their approach after falling for the bait. One would think that Russia would have developed a strategy for Kyiv after February 24, 2022 that would have provided troops with some knowledge of how to respond to urban combat. Maybe this is why Russian sent many Chechen fighters to Kyiv since it is possible some of their command may have fought the Russians in urban combat during the first Chechen war and thus would have some knowledge on how to deal with the Ukrainian fighters employing urban warfare tactics in Kyiv in early 2022.

After the Russian gained control over Grozny, the Chechen factions had split. One part was made up of secularist, while the other part was comprised of Islamic fundamentalists led by Shamil Basayev, who in mid-1995 while Grozny was under Russian control, would lead 200 of his fighters into Russian territory in the town of Budennovsk. This campaign sowed the seeds for Russia's eventual withdrawal of troops from Chechnya. On June of 1995, Basayev launched an attack on Budenovsk, first by attempting to seize the police station. (seizing police stations seems to be the first point of attack during a takeover. This was how separatists in eastern Ukraine took control of Donetsk.) But in Basayev's case, his unit failed to gain control of the police station, but ended up capturing a bank building and the city administrative building, followed by the local hospital where they planted boobytraps and took hostages. This gave the Chechen Islamist fighters leverage to make demands for Russian withdrawal from Chechnya in exchange for the release of hostages. They also asserted that if the Russians tried to use force to release the hostages, they would execute them. The Russian government were forced to negotiate with Basayev, but at the same time, the military would still try to capture the hospital from Basayev's forces. They managed to gain control of the first floor and free some of the hostages, while eliminating some of Basayev's men who were standing guard with sniper rifles and machine guns. The Russian

military did this twice, and ultimately stifled negotiations which ended shortly, allowing Basayev to return back to Chechnya after having killed 150 civilians during his terrorist operation in Budennovsk. While his actions there didn't yield him his demand for the withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya, the event caused a rift between the Russian government negotiators and the Russian military forces who acted to recapture the hospital under their own accord. The Russian government would tell Basayev that the Russian military were operating independently of the government.

Basayev's men launched two more attacks in Grozny, both orchestrated and conducted after months of calm. The relative quiet made the Russian soldiers complacent in both instances, causing large casualties during Basayev's attacks. The first attack in Grozny after a period of calm occurred in March of 1996 when Basayev's men captured a train before disembarking and attacking Russian MVD forces stationed in the north, west and southern parts of Grozny. The attack lasted five days and resulted in 200 casualties. Once again the Russians were initially flustered by the surprise attack and took some time to neutralize the enemy. Basayev managed to escape with multiple hostages. This attack was followed by calm for a few more months, before Basayev launched another surprise attack in August of 1996, this time with more men and a battle strategy that cut off the Russian forces from its supply lines, resulting in close to 1000 Russian casualties, which forced Russia to negotiate and end to the war and withdraw its troops from Chechnya. The heinous actions of hostage taking and conducting attacks after periods of calm wore out the Russian resolve to retain control of the Chechnya. Chechnya is not the first time that attacks on civilians won a nation its independence. Algeria was able to become independent of France when Algerian separatists called the FLN launched sporadic terrorist attacks on the civilian population, both on french people living in Algeria and also on french people living in Paris, leading to France and its population eventually becoming worn out from endless fighting and civilian death. The disproportionate response from the French military and other French nationalist groups, leading to death of scores of Algerian civilians led to international condemnation which further worked in favor of a likely Algerian independence. Another example is the Gaza Strip. The militants there were able to get Israel to withdraw its troops from there in 2005 by launching horrific attacks on the civilian population as well surprise ambushes on Israeli troops. In Afghanistan after the US occupied the country in 2002 after overthrowing the Taliban government, continued Taliban presence via terrorist attacks on civilian population as well as surprise ambush attacks on US-backed Afghan security forces led to the US eventually having to negotiate a settlement with the Taliban, which ultimately paved the way for the Taliban to reclaim its territory from US and

Afghan security forces. Ukraine, however, faces a different situation. In the case of Ukraine, Russia is occupying parts of the country that is mostly ethnic Russian and more than likely to become satisfied with the status quo of being governed or influenced by Russian officials. So, essentially, in that case, it is less likely that Russian soldiers will face ambush attacks and also less likely that ethnic Russians living there will have to deal with pro-Ukrainian factions carrying out terror attacks. At the moment, most of the attacks on those areas are the result of shelling from Ukrainian territories. With Russia's troops occupying a mostly Russian area, it is highly unlikely that Russia would face the same sequence of events that led to its withdrawal from Chechnya after the first Chechen war. Occupation is a very tenuous ordeal when a military is trying to occupy a population outside of its own national identity, but the case of Ukraine is such that Ukraine will not be able to incur the advantage of this for its lost territories in eastern Ukraine because much of eastern Ukraine is Russian speaking and many of those ethnic Russians identify as Russian and because of that, they will be less inclined to resist the status quo and all attempts to guilt-trip them into resisting it won't have much of a platform to operate. This is a different dynamic from the aforementioned cases of Algeria, Gaza, Chechnya in 1996, and Afghanistan, where it's easier to convince a population to resist the occupation of a foreign force. This is not the case in eastern Ukraine. However, there is the possibility that some tensions could arise in the DPR and LPR concerning remaining autonomous or joining the Russian federation. Many officials in the DPR like their autonomy and being able to set their own legislative agenda, but one can expect that there is an element brewing in eastern Ukraine that could insist on becoming a part of Russia. And this could create problems for Russia if tensions over such a matter reaches a point where clashes began to break out in the DPR or LPR between factions that support autonomy and factions that want to become part of the Russian federation. This is a very likely scenario, and will put the DPR and LPR officials back under Ukraine's sphere of influence since Ukraine would prefer that the breakaway regions remain autonomous, and even more so, hostile to Russia but friendly to Ukraine. The reason I say this is likely is because of what happened in Afghanistan after the country forced Russia to withdraw its forces from the country in the late 70s. The Afghan freedom fighters did not have a plan on moving forward with its independence and this led to a split amongst the fighters that had fought together against the Soviet occupation, leading to more violence and instability in Afghanistan. These freedom fighters became split—on one side was the Northern Alliance and on the other was the Taliban. This also happened in Chechnya after the Russian forces withdrew from the country in 1996—Chechen forces became split between Islamic jihadists and Chechen secularists and such

division gave Russia all the advantage it needed to later capture the entire country and make it a part of Russia. In this situation of eastern Ukraine, Ukraine will have that same advantage Russia had when it came to making Chechnya part of the Russian federation, should there be a rift between those in eastern Ukraine who want to remain autonomous and those who would rather become a part of Russia. This is why it would be advantageous for Ukraine to recognize the DPR and LPR as autonomous, but also willing to provide military support to ensure this autonomy, meaning that Ukraine will militarily back the DPR and LPR officials against opposition forces that want to make those regions part of the Russian federation. This deal automatically places the DPR and LPR under Ukraine's sphere of influence and sets the DPR and LPR officials somewhat politically against the Russian state. If clashes break out, Russia will likely move in quickly and occupy the DPR and LPR, as well as overthrow their autonomy. But now those DPR and LPR insurgents will have to lean on Ukraine and go to guerrilla warfare tactics in order to resist Russian occupation. Now Ukraine can persuade DPR and LPR insurgent fighters to re-identify as Ukrainian-but-Russian-speaking in exchange for support. If Ukraine is wise, they would not only just recognize the autonomy of the DPR and LPR and pledge to militarily back them against opposition groups that want to make the DPR and LPR a part of the Russian federation, Ukraine would also help the DPR and LPR set up a secret underground arms and aid smuggling tunnel that would ensure DPR and LPR resistance against a future Russian occupation. DPR and LPR already have their own legislation and its highly unlikely that they will want to throw away control over it. But now, in this scenario, one has to consider the reality of what will happen. DPR and LPR insurgents will have no choice but to use the same guerrilla tactics that the Chechen fighters employed during the first Chechen war, i.e. using civilian infrastructure, launching attacks on Russian territories by way of hostage taking, taking over train stations, surrounding Russian forces in eastern Ukraine and conducting surprise attacks that will wear out the Russian occupation. Like the Chechen fighters during the first Chechen war, DPR and LPR separatists may be able to receive troop support from volunteers in the Russian federation who would could sneak into eastern Ukraine. These aspects will further push Russia to the negotiating table and compel them to withdraw their forces if they cannot muster public support for the war. The media factor was critical for the success of the Chechens during the first Chechen War. And it wasn't so much the Chechens allowing the media to operate unrestricted in Grozny that was attributable to that success, but Russia's unwillingness to allocate resources towards controlling how information about the war was disseminated. Such negligence on their part kept the Russian public from mustering up

support for continued Russian efforts to seize Chechnya. Meanwhile, Russian casualties continued to mount and mothers became concerned about the whereabouts of their sons drafted into the Russian military. During the Ukraine war, both Ukraine and Russia maintained a tight grip on how information was allocated, with neither country allowing any room for doubt concerning how the war was to be understood. During the second Chechen War was when Russia began using a strategy of not referring to a military effort as a war and this was to keep the public from becoming concerned since the public will more likely tolerate something considered to be a military operation. During the second Chechen war, Russia didn't refer to the conflict as a war, but as a "counter-terrorist operation", and this did wonders for how the public perceived the conflict--an operation sounds much less perturbing than an actual war. Russia also improved their use of media to control the narratives about the war, which is something they did not do during the first Chechen war. Another factor that helped the Russians during the second Chechen war was that after the first Chechen war, Chechnya had become inundated with rogue militia groups and renegade fighters. Basayev, the leader of the Islamists fighters, had acquired large funding from Islamic nations such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE. They also received help from Osama Bin Laden--eventual mastermind of the 9/11 terror attacks in New York City, who would send thousands of mercenaries from Afghanistan and Yemen to help the Islamic fighters in Chechnya. The catch-22 here is that the funding emboldened Basayev to launch incursions into the Russian territory of Daghestan. Basayev had won a strategic victory for Chechnya when he led his men into Russian territory of Budennovsk and captured a hospital, taking numerous people hostage. This ultimately led to Russia negotiating and withdrawing its troops from Chechnya without officially guaranteeing the status of Chechnya. But at the outset of second Chechen war, Basayev tried to repeat this strategic maneuver of attempting to assert their geopolitical agenda by way of incursion into Russian territory, launching an invasion of Dagestan. Russia had been training in the North Caucasus for a possible second war against Chechnya, and was able to drive the Islamist forces out of Daghestan in short order. The mistake that would eventually cause Chechnya to lose its independence was when the Islamists started bombing civilians in Russian territory. After the Russians had driven out the Islamists from Daghestan, an apartment was bombed in Daghestan in August of 1999, and then shortly thereafter in September, more apartment bombings took place in other Russian cities, even in the capital Moscow. The bombings were carried out by Islamic Arab militants fighting for Chechen forces. Some speculated that the bombings were false flags carried out by the FSB since three FSB agents were arrested after being seen carrying suspicious items into

one of the apartment buildings in Moscow. Later, they stated that it was only an anti-terror drill. Nevertheless, the timing of it, drew considerable suspicion. Ultimately, however, the incursion into Russian territory by Islamist forces made it very easy to implicate them in the subsequent apartment bombings. Such an event made it much easier for Russia to convince the public of the necessity of launching another invasion of Chechnya in the name of national security. Hence, Russia would garner more public support for their military operations in Chechnya, making sure to call it a “counter terrorist operation” and not a war. If we fast forward to February 24, 2022, we notice that Russia applies this same tactic which worked during the second Chechen War, calling the invasion of Ukraine a “special military operation” This was done to curb possible concerns from the Russian public of the implications of a full-scale war and the potential casualties that the Russian public would have to stomach.

After the first Chechen war, after having incurred numerous casualties from fighting in an urban warfare scenario, Russia, during the second Chechen war, had tried to apply a strategy in which they would operate in Grozny on the basis of avoiding engagement in urban combat. For this purpose, they incorporated more air power and air strikes on Chechen positions in urban areas. However, secret underground tunnels and passageways used by the Chechen fighters forced Russia to abandon their strategy of avoiding urban combat. To avoid a repeat of the casualties of the first Chechen war, Russia employed more experienced fighters at the outset of their advance into Grozny. They also dispatched ground troops to move alongside of armored vehicles. This greatly repelled ambush assaults from Chechen fighters. Russia also improved communications, oftentimes purposely communicating to each other their next movement in order to lure Chechen fighters to an area where they would be ambushed by Russian forces. Chechen fighters were intercepting radio transmissions, but when Russia got wind of this, they would simply communicate their positions for the purpose of reeling in Chechen fighters. Following Russia’s initial assault on Grozny in response to the apartment bombings in Daghestan and Moscow, the Islamists Chechen militants launched more terrorist attacks in Russian territory, attacks that included hostage taking and bombings. Starting in May of 2002, Basayev led his militants in a terrorist campaign that included the bombings of trains in Stavropol and Moscow, as well as the bombing of a Russian aircraft in 2004. Hostage taking operations took place at a Moscow theater and Beslan school, where Basayev’s militants would kill hundreds of civilians as the Russian FSB attempted to breach the buildings. The Islamist forces were using this tactic to wear out the Russian resolve, much like those tactics did during the first Chechen war. However, in 2002, Russia was already reporting an end to the war, which is another

form of information strategy, quelling public concern about rising troop casualties. The militants in Chechnya denied this and continued to conduct guerrilla warfare and terror tactics inside Russian territory as well as extensive presence in the North Caucasus with over 1000 separatist fighters. Basayev was killed in 2006 from an accidental mine blast, and the separatist Chechen president, Aslan Maskhadov, was killed a year earlier in 2005 during a raid in which Russian forces attempted to arrest him. Early on during the second Chechen war, Mashkhadov, largely condemned Basayev's terrorist operations in Russia, but later began to encourage them. Russia had gathered evidence of Mashkhadov calling for increased terror activities on Russian territories and went after him. In retrospect, during the first Chechen war, it is arguable that terrorist tactics played a role in wearing out the Russian occupation of Chechnya between 1994 and 1996, combined with the fact that Russia did not use propaganda to persuade the Russian public that intervention in Chechnya was necessary. The success of Russia during the second Chechen war was not only rooted in the preparation, but also in using information to quell public concern about Russia's military operations there. Russia would refer to the second Chechen war as a "counter terrorist operation." This, for one, automatically had a psychological effect on the Russian population, where they would be more approving of Russia's military carrying out an operation as opposed to embarking upon a full-scale invasion or starting a full-scale war. This essentially gave Russia time to carry out its military engagement before public sentiment would begin to oppose Russian foreign policy, much like it did during the Japan/Russian war in 1905, where Russia incurred significant losses, which led to a revolution in the country and calls for reforms to the Russian constitution. The same happened during World War I, where Russia was taking severe losses, leading to the Russian people becoming fed up to the point of overthrowing the Russian empire in what was called the Bolshevik Revolution. We see even as of August 24th, some domestic dissidence inside Russia has already manifested with the assassination of the daughter of Alexandr Dugin. An anti-Putin group called the National Republican Army that operates underground in Russia took credit for the act, and they are probably responsible for sabotage operations that took place in Crimea, one being an attack at a Russian airbase and another at an ammunition depot. This event is a key indicator that Russia is running out of time as far as keeping its own troops operating in the eastern Ukraine. Hence why Russia has been lobbying to find mercenaries who will volunteer to fight on their behalf because Russia knows that negative public perception of their goals abroad will stifle Russia's chances of achieving them. This is largely why Russia was compelled to withdraw from Chechnya in 1996. Russia, however, managed to keep public sentiment of their

goals in Chechnya in the early 2000s from breaking out into all out opposition to the Russian government in three ways. First, as mentioned, they called the military effort a “counter terrorist operation”. Second, was that the operation was precipitated by a terrorist attack in Russia, which underscored the necessity of Russia invading Chechnya to be a matter of Russian national security. Third, was that Russia declared the war to be over after 2 years, which also puts the public’s mind at ease. This allowed Russia to continue operating in Chechnya without being in danger of evoking public concern.

This is a key element to understand about the Ukraine war because it may be an indicator that Ukraine might be able to win this first round. We can also predict that Russia will declare the war over in 2 years. They clearly give themselves a two year deadline. Russia also did not enter this war on the heels of a major terrorist attack. This was also the case in the first Chechen war, which led to Russia being unable to sustain public support and thus having to withdraw in 1996. So we can predict that the dynamic that are playing out in Ukraine will ultimately lead to Russia’s complete withdrawal by 2024. They do not have the backdrop to sustain public approval of their war for longer than that. This seems to be a historical pattern. At the very least, Ukraine can expect forces of the Russian federation to withdraw of the Donbass in 2024.

So in looking back at the Chechen wars, Ukraine has to be careful not to repeat the same mistake that the Islamists did back in 1999 by doing something along the lines of conducting a series of apartment bombings on Russia soil. In doing such, the Islamist ultimately gave Russia the means to present to the Russian public, a justification to invade Chechnya in the name of internal national security. This gave Russia all the time it needed to conduct and pursue their military goals there. Russia did not have this backdrop of justification in the first Chechen war, which ultimately worked in favor of the Chechens in resisting the Russian occupation. Likewise, in 2022, when it comes to Ukraine, Russia does not have that factor—Ukraine carrying out a terror attack on Russian soil or being a threat to Russia’s internal national security. So we can expect that Ukraine could possibly come out victorious this first time around, if they play their cards right. However, there is another factor to consider. Much of eastern Ukraine identifies as Russian, so in order to delve into this factor, we have to look at the dynamics of what happened after the first Chechen war and thus possibly forecast that those dynamics could play out inside the DPR and LPR breakaway regions.

Chapter 7: Exploiting the Power Vacuum in Eastern Ukraine

After the first Chechen war, the country had become inundated with various rogue militias and renegade radical Islamic groups and there had always been some tension between Chechen secularist and Islamic radicals. Ukraine, on the other hand, was smart to integrate Azov into the Ukrainian military, keeping them from becoming a renegade militia. We can expect that even before the eventual Russian pull out of the Donbass region in 2024, political tensions will arise within the DPR and LPR concerning both autonomy and integration into the Russian federation. There will be officials in the DPR/LPR that insist on autonomy, and there will be officials in the DPR/LPR opposed to autonomy but in favor of become part of the Russian federation. This will work in Ukraine's favor if they play their cards right. If they can somehow intervene, encourage tension between pro-autonomy factions in the DPR and pro-integration factions in the DPR, instigate the rift and pull one side(the side supporting autonomy) into Ukraine's sphere of influence, then it could set up a possible pathway into those regions being reintegrated back into Ukraine because the Russian federation will ultimately side with the faction of the DPR or LPR that wants to become annexed into the Russian federation, leaving the faction that wants to remain autonomous on the side of Ukraine. On social media, there is some evidence that many in those breakaway regions do not support becoming part of the Russian federation and depending on how strong this sentiment is, there could be some militancy backing it up, which would, by default, place those in favor of DPR and LPR autonomy back to the side of Ukraine. In this scenario, Ukraine can offer to respect their autonomy, perhaps reasserting Minsk II and then offer to uphold the autonomy laid out in Minsk II if those DPR and LPR pro-autonomy factions allow the Ukrainian army to enter the eastern Ukraine for the sake of helping them resist those trying to get the DPR and LPR annexed into the Russian federation. There is a lot that would have to be addressed in such a negotiation, things like allowing the Russian language and also providing amnesty for those DPR and LPR fighters. The question is can Ukraine or the intelligence services of its allies foment a political schism between those in the DPR and LPR that support autonomy and those in the DPR and LPR whom insist on becoming part of the Russian federation. The level of hostility that arises between those two camps will correlate to the likelihood of Ukraine keeping the eastern breakaway areas under its control. This rift would have to be fomented and facilitated somewhere near the end of the 2 year deadline that Russia gives its military to operate during a conflict, which would thus keep Russia from being able to convince its own public of a longer stay in eastern Ukraine. To reiterate, Ukraine in the ensuing years after the Russian

eventual pullout in 2024 must not give Russia the means pursue a full-scale second war by way of convincing its own public that Russian operations in Ukraine is a matter of internal Russian security. Attacks on Russian soil during the current hostilities, however, will wear out the Russian occupation if they are carried out closer to the end of the 2 year deadline. But when Russia pulls out, and then subsequently encounters an attack from a foreign adversary on its own soil, such could be used as the impetus to launch another invasion of Ukraine. Basically, the rule garnered from the first Chechen war is that attacks on the enemy's soil can wear out their occupation efforts in another country. But if that country has already militarily pulled out of the country, then attacks on their soil will do the opposite. It will motivate them to launch a full-scale invasion and eventually conquer the nations responsible, all while getting public support to do so. Right now as Russia has not declared an end to the Ukraine/Russian war as well as not having had convinced the public of the justification since there was no terror attack carried out by Ukrainians on Russian soil prior to, attacks on their soil during this ongoing war will wear out the Russian military's resolve in eastern Ukraine. This was the case during the first Chechen war. But if Russia pulls their troops out of eastern Ukraine, any subsequent attacks on Russian soil will compel the Russian public to support another Russian military incursion into Ukraine. This was the case for the second Chechen war which was largely supported by the Russian public and ultimately led to Russia's victory.

The Ukraine/Russia war has raised questions about the viability of the Geneva convention. The Geneva Convention and International Humanitarian Law does not take sides during an ongoing conflict and does not factor into it the reasons for the conflict. Essentially, when a nation is attacked by an aggressor, the invaded nation is not permitted to use any means at its disposal to resist the aggression, and has to take care to avoid civilian casualties in a situation where the aggressor nation, if compelled to do such, can simply retreat back to its own country, whereas the invaded nation is in many cases trapped in their own land, which leaves little opportunity to take refuge in areas other than populated or urban ones. The use of residential areas to evade strikes from enemy forces is a war crime according to international humanitarian law because the law is meant to protect the civilian population from military operations, whether they be offensive or defensive. This has posed a problem for not only Ukraine but those who support the Ukrainian army to take back lands seized by the Russian military. When looking back at history, one can presume that only way to resist and defeat an occupation is by using civilian areas to conduct urban warfare tactics, which is proven to work against invasion and occupation, hence why there is no way to support a defending military without supporting their use of civilian

and urban infrastructure to conduct surprise attacks on the aggressor nation's military. Oftentimes, this leads to civilian casualties, which ironically further vilifies the invading nation and helps muster up support for the defending army and also increases the chances that the defending nation win the conflict. Without this aspect, the Chechens would not have been able to repel Russian forces during the first Chechen war. This is why there needs to be an amendment to the Geneva Convention where the defending nation, both combatants and non-combatants would retain civilian status throughout the conflict. This is because the civilian population by and large support any actions deemed to be self-defense and therefore may not need protection—as laid out in the Geneva Convention, at least when it comes to being extracted from the military framework of their own country's military. Hypothetically, under a new convention, they can simply be regarded as “civilian” only in relation to the aggressor state. Ukrainian citizens overwhelmingly support Ukraine's military defending the country by all means necessary, and because it is defense, they should still be garnered “civilian status” relative to the aggressor nation, but not relative to their own defensive army. Meaning, civilians in the defensive nation should be subject to how their own military labels them and if the military endangers their own civilians, then it should not be considered a war crime, but a violation of the nations own domestic policy if their legislation made it a matter of law that the military not endanger its civilians. The way this new legal proposal would apply to Ukraine is that all civilians within its internationally recognized borders would be recognized by the international law as “defending party”, but only in relation to its own military. They would be recognized as “civilians” by the international community in relation to the aggressor nation or separatist entity. When the aggressor nation or separatist entity would violate laws of warfare by firing into or from civilian areas in Ukraine, it would be internationally recognized as a war crime against civilians. However, if the defending state(Ukraine) fires upon its own citizens or endangers their own citizens within their internationally recognized borders, then it would be considered by the international community as friendly fire and accountability could only be applied from the framework of the domestic laws of the country. Also, under this new hypothetical convention, the invading country(Russia) would be considered to be endangering the civilians of its own country by attacking civilian areas of another country. Which means if the invaded country retaliates and launches attacks into the nation of the invading country and kills civilians in the process, both the invading country and the invaded country would be considered to be in violation of the laws of warfare in that instance. The attacks against the nation of the invading country would be considered to have been invited by the invading nation's advance into the invaded country,

which thus systemically placed civilians in the nation of the invading country at risk. An example, under this new hypothetical convention, would be Russia's invasion of Ukraine being cited by the international community as Russia placing its own civilians inside Russia in danger, with any retaliation in Russian territory by Ukrainian forces being considered to still be a war crime, but having been invited by the Russian forces invasion of Ukraine. This new parameter would solve the problem of the defending nation having to concede all advantage of maintaining its status-quo and existence just to adhere to the Geneva Convention and the International Laws of Warfare, which on paper favors the aggressor nation and handicaps the defensive nation. This new proposal should be introduced in a new convention, perhaps "The Kyiv Convention" since the Ukraine war has resurfaced questions concerning how the laws of war should be applied.

In terms of reclaiming the breakaway region, a good example to cite is how ISIS was able to reclaim parts of Iraq from the Shitte government. In 2013, feeling ostracized by the new US-backed Shitte government, many Sunnis took to the streets in protest to oppressive policies. This unrest allowed ISIS to recruit and join forces with local Sunni militias, growing their numbers, and eventually taking control of various parts of Iraq, i.e. Mosul, Fallujah, and Ramadi. In Ukraine's situation, Ukrainians don't have any cultural or religious connection to much of the inhabitants of the eastern Ukraine, and this would make it harder for Ukraine to take advantage of the power vacuum that would be created if hostilities began to take place between pro-autonomy DPR/LPR officials and DPR/LPR officials that want to join the Russian federation. In the case of protests on this matter by citizens of the DPR/LPR, Ukraine would not have any means of kinship to take advantage and thus offer its solidarity with those protesters. In the case of Iraq, ISIS are made up of Sunnis, and were therefore able to express solidarity with the local Sunni population and militias protesting the new Shiite government. In order for this dynamic to favor Ukraine in their attempt to recapture lost territory with the help of the locals, Ukraine will have to find a means to identify with the Russian speakers in the DPR/LPR who want autonomy but do not want to become part of the Russian federation. This will require Ukraine facilitating the organization of its own Russian-speaking but Ukrainian-identifying militia. In essence, Ukraine would develop and back a fighting force that identifies as Ukrainian but chooses to speak Russian. This would be done in order to show some measure of solidarity with those in the DPR/LPR who choose autonomy as opposed to annexation into Russia. Many of the Azov members in a sense identify as Ukrainian even as native Russian speakers, but are implicated in some egregious acts carried out in Mariupol, which would make it hard for

components of that group to garner some semblance of kinship with Russian speakers in the DPR/LPR. However, here is Zelenskyy, who was a native Russian speaker that ultimately identified as Ukrainian and he entered office on a platform that sought to erase difference between the Ukrainian speakers and Russian speakers. This aspect that I mention is why Ukraine must remain prudent in not completely alienating the Russian culture because a major strategy in Ukraine reclaiming the Donetsk and Luhansk will be Ukraine's ability to work with Russian-speakers in those areas who do not want to become part of the Russian Federation. Furthermore, this would also require Ukraine to scale back its artillery bombardments of those areas. In addition to that, Ukraine also scaling back its anti-Russian rhetoric will prevent Russia from using that as evidence to implicate Ukraine in any attacks that may occur on Russian soil, should Russia try to orchestrate a false flag operation in order to get more public support for another Russian offensive into Ukraine.

There is without question that there will be people in Donetsk and Luhansk that will be militantly opposed to joining the Russian Federation. Which is why Ukraine must shift its policy in such a way that will make any decision by LPR/DPR citizens even harder to decide to join the Russian Federation. The question is can Ukraine denominate a Russian-speaker that still identifies as Ukrainian into a tangible terminology? What would be a good word for it? Can Ukrainians refer to them as Rus-people, much like the Rus people of the old Kievan Rus? If Zelenskyy can address those who want to remain autonomous without joining the Russian federation, it could be possible to evoke kinship without alienating the staunch Ukrainian nationalists that insist on the Ukrainian language mandate. In Ukraine, there is the existence of a Ukrainian nationalist movement called the Ukrainian National Assembly and the linked Ukrainian Self-Defense Organization(UNA-UNSO), which agrees on the unity of East Slavic peoples. However this group believes that Ukraine, not Russia is entitled to being the dominant state of the Rus' peoples since the original center of the Kievan Rus' empire was Kiev. If Ukraine can channel this movement into one that facilitates a doctrine that could help rekindle some sense of identity that would link a Russian-speaking east Slav to Kiev, it is possible that Ukraine may be able to carve out a possible path to bring eastern Ukraine back into Kiev's sphere of influence. Keep in mind that resisting an occupation is much different that reclaiming territory. The latter is more difficult and requires having an element in that territory that will invite one's intervention. For example, for the US to invade Afghanistan in 2001, they had to aid the Northern Alliance whom had been at war with the Taliban throughout the 1990s. Same with Russia. Russia invaded Ukraine because the separatists in eastern Ukraine who were in conflict with Kyiv essentially invited Russia to invade Ukraine and

helped facilitate the occupation. This was what occurred in Chechnya as well—pro-Russian Chechens had to invite and help facilitate Russia's advance into Grozny. Likewise, if Ukraine wants to take back the east of its country, then they will need a similar dynamic at work in which a contentious entity in eastern Ukraine would be at odds with certain political policies in the DPR/LPR and would thus invite and facilitate the Ukrainian military's return to those regions. However, this has to coincide with Russia preparing to withdraw its forces from the east of Ukraine. One has to keep in mind that Russia can only remain in a military conflict as long as its own population will allow it. Hence why Russia gives itself a max of two years to complete its goals before either withdrawing or declaring the war to be over. Otherwise, they are playing with fire and a possible repeat of history when revolutions in Russia triggered regime change. Russia is aware of this, and they will not be able to stay in eastern Ukraine for longer than two years. They will withdraw and then prepare for a second offensive, but this time with a pretext that involves a major terror attack in Russia since such events will evoke public support for another military intervention. This is exactly how Russia was able to win the second Chechen war—it was essentially precipitated by a series of terrorist attacks in Russia which triggered public support for another Russian invasion of Grozny. What aided that process was the act of rogue militias in Chechnya attempting to take Dagestan. This is why Ukraine has to be careful not to make this same mistake that the Islamist did which triggered their defeat in the second Chechen war, allowing Russia to convey to the Russian public the necessity of pursuing a military course of action against the entirety of Chechnya. Russia failed to do this for the first invasion of Ukraine—basically convince the Russian public of the necessity to do so, but will nonetheless try to do so for a second offensive on Kyiv. If Zelenskyy can avoid indulging harsh anti-Russian rhetoric after the Russians pull out of eastern Ukraine in 2024, it will be a strategic victory for Ukraine because Russia will not have a pretext that will evoke public support for a second offensive against Kyiv. If we look back, in regards to the first Chechen war, the reason attacks on Russian soil helped trigger a Russian withdrawal was because they occurred as the war had been ongoing and as Russian troops and the Russian public were already becoming weary. Not to mention, attacks on Russian troops in Grozny after long periods of calm had a very strong demoralizing effect. Now the reason the attacks on Russian soil actually worked against the Chechens in second Chechen war was because they occurred years after the Russian forces had already withdrawn from Chechnya, which allowed Russia to persuade the Russian public of Chechnya's aggression and the need for the Russian military to finish the job of taking over the country, hence why it was easier for Russia to gather public support. It was a completely

different dynamic at work. During the first Chechen war, the attacks on Russian soil wore out the Russian resolve because they occurred as the war had already been raging for over a year—they also set the Russian government and military at odds with each other (remember the hostage crisis in Buddenovsk?). During the second Chechen war, the attacks on Russian soil actually triggered Russian resolve and initiated the conflict, and that was the mistake for Chechnya because Russia's military offensives are almost totally contingent on the Kremlin's ability to garner public support, which they did get the second time around against Chechnya. Ukraine, however, would not need to apply such insidious tactics like terrorism and may be able to reclaim the DPR/LPR by way of invitation by the pro-autonomy DPR/LPR officials and with little to no resistance from their opposition.

The Ukrainian nationalist movement called the Ukrainian National Assembly and the linked Ukrainian Self-Defense Organization (UNA-UNSO) formed in Ukraine in the early 90s after the fall of the Soviet Union and based its platform on the idea of an independent Ukraine that espoused loyalty to the Ukrainian statehood regardless of cultural allegiance, whether Ukrainian-speaking or Russian-speaking. This group was instrumental in helping eastern European countries resist Russian imperialism during the 90s. They participated in the conflict in Transnistria, protecting the ethnic Ukrainians there from the Moldovan government. The UNA-UNSO fought in the Georgian war in 1992 against the pro-Russian separatists in Abkhazia, and also helped Chechnya fight against the Russian invasion during the first Chechen war from 1994 - 1996, which led to Chechnya's de facto independence. The UNA-UNSO also fought in the Donbass War in 2014 and the subsequent Ukraine/Russian war in 2022. While the platform of the UNA-UNSO espoused a civic nationalism, many of its components have maintained extreme right leanings. The group later unified into the Right Sector party which has been the main target of Russia's rhetoric that identifies the group as staunch neo-Nazis and terrorists. Much of Russia's concern about the Right Sector had to do with the component of the Right Sector comprised of members from the UNA-UNSO, which had been a problem for Russia's geopolitical ambitions since after the fall of the Soviet Union. Russia also considered the UNA-UNSO's fighters in Chechnya to be the most dangerous due to their Slavic appearance and fluency in the Russian language. The UNA-UNSO has also developed contacts with pro-Ukrainian far right Russian groups inside Russia and this will be the most important key element that could bring eastern Ukraine back into the control of Kiev. Strategically, the first thing Ukraine would have to do in order to alter a trajectory that is heading in the direction of the DPR/LPR becoming part of the Russian Federation is to foment political tension

inside the DPR/LPR. Such would work in favor of Ukraine. If Ukraine goes down this path using the tactic that the CIA has used throughout its existence to weaken other nations politically, then Ukraine would have to allow way for the UNA-UNSO to touch base with its pro-Ukrainian Russian contacts in Russia so that the UNA-UNSO could orchestrate for them to go into Donetsk and Luhansk and begin a strategy of pushing for the DPR and LPR to become part of the Russian federation—they would also recruit on this platform so that a counter movement that strongly insists on DPR/LPR autonomy will arise in reaction. After this is achieved and some friction begins to come about politically, those who facilitated the schism could simply return to Russia and send more pro-Ukrainian Russians to the DPR/LPR regions to help facilitate more political friction there. Once the tensions escalate and pro-autonomy DPR/LPR officials begin to use rhetoric that alienates any opposition their platform, the pro-Ukrainian Russians there operating incognito would—as part of the plan—begin to appeal to the Russian Federation on behalf of the anti-autonomy faction of the DPR/LPR. This will, in turn, force the pro-autonomy DPR and LPR factions to appeal to Kiev for help in resisting becoming a part of the Russian Federation. In this regard, Kyiv would subsequently have the upper hand on negotiating with their former enemies-now-turned-allies in the fight against Russian hegemony. Once this is achieved, the pro-Ukrainian Russians that sided with the anti-autonomy DPR/LPR factions and facilitated the friction could simply return to Russia without notice or suspicion. Meanwhile, Ukraine could begin pushing the UNA-UNSO's original platform of civic nationalism all throughout the country, advocating for both the rights and Ukrainianism/ambiguity of Russian speakers. This will open the door for Ukraine to be able to recruit more Russian speakers inside the DPR/LPR regions against the anti-autonomy pro-Russian Federation components of the DPR/LPR. At this point, the pro autonomy DPR/LPR officials would likely begin letting Ukrainian forces back into the region. If this happens just after Russia pulls its troops out of eastern Ukraine in 2024, Russia will not be able to convince its public of the necessity to return there and deploy more troops to eastern Ukraine to risk their lives for another country. Hence, why in the year 2023, Russia may lobby for the DPR/LPR to hurry and join the Russian Federation, which would end any chance of Ukraine reclaiming that territory since Russian troops could remain there indefinitely and relegate all attacks from Ukrainian forces as attacks against the internal security of the Russian state. Thus, the importance of Ukraine fomenting internal strife within the DPR/LPR regarding the status of those regions so that Russia will not be able to annex those territories into the Russian Federation, at least not without resistance from those components of the DPR/LPR that insist on autonomy. And because Ukraine would ideally have been

promoting civic nationalism, it would be hard for anyone in Russia to believe that Ukraine has any intention of harming Russians in Ukraine, should any false flags be conducted to garner support for another Russian offensive against Kyiv. The end result of DPR/LPR pro-autonomy factions leaning towards Kyiv should be a Russian withdrawal in 2024, a quick Ukrainian show of force in DPR/LPR territory against those seeking to have those territories enjoined to Russia, followed by a quick surrender of all those entities to Ukrainian forces. Ideally, the pro-autonomy DPR/LPR officials and Ukraine would reassert the Minsk II, allowing the DPR/LPR to be slowing re-integrated back into Ukraine following a negotiated period of time. Zelenskyy would then pass legislation giving some protection to the Russian language.

From this point Ukrainian identity will be an ideology based identity that is defined in loyalty to Ukrainian statehood irrespective of language, which would distinguish its East Slav component from that of Belarusian and Russian which places emphasis on language. Essentially, East Slavs that don't emphasize language over Ukrainian statehood will automatically make one Ukrainian, and such will put forth a trajectory that may one day unite all Rus people and make Kiev once again the center of that unification.

All Ukraine would have to do to implement this plan would be to have Kiev, during the year 2023, make appeals to the Russian population, ensuring them that they have no intention of attacking inside of Russia. In the mean time, the UNA-UNSA would try to establish contacts with its far right connections in Russia throughout the year 2023, setting up a plan in which those pro-Ukrainian Russians inside Russia would travel to the DPR/LPR to sow political tension between those who want to remain autonomous and those who want to become part of Russia. In order for that to work, Ukraine would have to allow the DPR/LPR militants to become comfortable in their control of the region, at least for a time so that the political aspect of whether or not to remain autonomous or become a part of Russia can start to emerge as a contentious theme in DPR/LPR politics. In late 2023, after continued resistance from Ukrainian forces, the Russian military will begin to become very war weary and reports of more Russian casualties will ultimately concern the Russian public, forcing the Russian military to pull their troops out of the region of eastern Ukraine shortly thereafter. Subsequently, the Russian military will start preparing for a second offensive on Kyiv and at the same time look for justification to do so. With Ukraine already having allied itself with pro-autonomy DPR/LPR forces, the re-occupation of the areas there by Ukrainian forces should be very quick and without any resistance, resembling the Taliban's quick takeover of Afghanistan in 2021 after the US troops pulled out of the country.

Chapter 8: Counterfeiting the Ruble

Some political circles believe that Ukraine will not be able to win the war against Russia since the United States is insistent on remaining restrained when it comes to providing Ukraine with weapons that could turn the tide in the war. For example, fighter jet. Reason being is the fear that the war could escalate. Thus, the likely trajectory as it stands on August 28, 2022 is a negotiated settlement that will leave Russia in control of just a little over 20% of Ukraine's internationally recognized territory, much of which is their agricultural and industrial areas. Such would leave Ukraine totally dependent on other nations in order to sustain itself. Not to mention, the current international support and aid for Ukraine will likely abate over time due to the fact that multiple nations around the world are already growing weary of the impact sanctions against Russia is having on their economy. Peace for Ukraine would come at a cost and leave it all the more likely that many elements in Ukraine could become even more radicalized, perhaps seeking other ways to release their indignation. Ukraine has stated on numerous occasions the equipment they need to win the war, but much of that has fallen on deaf ears. While western aid is helping Ukraine strategically in some areas, it ultimately won't be enough and all fighting ends up becoming symbolic, backed by a principle and not by a solid strategy. This will ultimately speed up the forecasted end result. But still and all, the aid that Ukraine has received from western nations in terms of financial and security has allowed Ukraine to inflict the Russian army with significant loses both on the ground and in the air. But the lack of airpower and long-range missiles will keep Ukraine from being able to carry out a major counter-offensive, which is the only way Ukraine can recover lost territories occupied by Russian forces and comprised largely of people who identify as Russian. If those occupied areas were comprised of Ukrainians, then the lack of air power and long range artillery would not prevent Ukraine from recapturing those areas because Ukraine could simply recruit more volunteers from within the occupied areas in order to fight against the occupation forces. This is much harder to do in areas that share the same ethnic backdrop as the occupiers. A scenario where occupied areas of Ukraine would be made up of Ukrainians would allow Ukraine to do what ISIS did not recapture territories from US-backed forces in Iraq—recruit from within the occupied areas on the basis of kinship and attempt to reclaim the territories. ISIS was able to do this in the Anbar province, Mosul and Fallujah because of protest against the government, protest which were comprised of Sunnis—the same sect of Islam practiced by ISIS. If the occupied territories in Ukraine were made up of Ukrainians, insurgent elements there could, like ISIS, recruit from among their own demographic and more easily

reclaim the lost territory. Since Ukraine does not have this factor working in their favor, the current supply of weapons will not be enough to drive the Russians out of the eastern Ukraine. The trepidation among western powers in doing everything to keep Russia from targeting them with nuclear weapons is another factor that does not work in Ukraine's favor. And most experts and academics see this to be case which is why many of the prominent scholars are advocating for Ukraine to cut its losses—not because they support Russia, but because they see a trajectory that is obviously not conducive to a Ukrainian victory. On the other hand, some military experts believe that it would be better to take an assertive approach of getting involved while Russia is depleted military and while morale is low among Russian soldiers. Not to mention, Ukraine is capable of putting together a very large fighting force consisting of Ukrainian soldiers and foreign fighters. Russia is leery of committing too many troops to the conflict.

Ukraine has been supplied with a significant amount of firearms, body armor, drones, anti-tank, and anti-aircraft missile technology, as well as intel and an efficient rail system for moving supplies. Ukrainian artillery does not have good protection from enemy fire and can be easily targeted and destroyed during combat scenarios. Russia also has longer range missiles in their artillery systems. The US has high-powered weapons like fighter jets that Ukraine could use to win the war against Russia, but the US has been hesitant to supply them to Ukraine. They have, however, supplied Ukraine with HIMARS rockets, which is giving Ukraine the impetus it needs to launch a counter-offensive in the south. Much of the US's hesitancy in going all out in backing Ukraine is due to Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons against any country aiding Ukraine militarily during the war. Moreover, nations normally acquire nuclear weapons not just for exerting geopolitical strength, but also for ensuring mutually assured destruction, meaning if a nation is an existential threat, then that nation must also risk its own existential destruction by way of a nuclear strike. Most nuclear weapons today are vastly more powerful than the ones used on Japan during World War II. But some political elements in the US believe that Russia is bluffing on its threats to use nuclear weapons, and because of that, the US should step up aid to Ukraine by supplying fighter jets and longer range missile systems. Important to note that aside from Russia's threats, the US is battling another threat when it comes to aiding Ukraine. The US is facing the total loss of trust by its allies abroad which would have a devastating impact on its national currency. Essentially, if the US withdraws support for Ukraine in such a way that it justifies Ukraine accusing the US of betrayal, many of the US's main allies will take note of it and likely make plans to withdraw their alliances and agreements with the United States. For example the petrodollar agreement between the US

and Saudi Arabia in which Saudi Arabia agreed to sell oil for US dollars in exchange for military backing. Ukraine knows this aspect to be the case and is wisely using this factor to help them secure aid and weaponry from the US in the hopes of not only getting the weapons it needs, but also—should they finally receive the fighter jets and other supplies, drive the Russian forces out of Ukraine internationally recognized territories. One can thus say that the value of the US dollar is built on foreign military intervention and the trust of US allies.

One strategy used by Ukraine to deter Russian aggression was calling for nations to cripple the Russian economy through sanctions. However, this largely failed due to the fact that Russia sits on a vast amount of raw materials that much of the western world relies upon, making it impossible for anyone to believe that such restriction on Russia's export markets would be tenable in the long term since western nations would become weary of the penalties they have to impose upon themselves just to stifle Russian economically. Thus, one has to presume that western nations would be able to hold out on buying from Russia in the long term. This factor, along with the fact that because Russia has all these raw materials, they always have the option of restricting the purchase of those materials to strictly Russian rubles. This threat alone props the value of the ruble. In fact, Russia simply saying publicly that they may stop selling their oil only for rubles is enough for the ruble to rise in value throughout the time that sanctions are being levied upon them. Many economists are perplexed that the ruble, in response to western sanctions had become stronger than ever. What's surprising is that it largely ignored how much of an impact statements or threats by Russia to sell their raw materials for rubles only has on propping up its own economy. If economists were aware of this factor, the solution to countering it would be to simply threaten to mass-counterfeit rubles at the international level and limit how much confidence the ruble can garner. So now when Russia threatens that they would only sell their oil for rubles, those listening would remember the counterfeiting threats and presume that it's possible that the rubles attained abroad might be fake and also put them at risk of being investigated for counterfeiting. The impact of the threat alone could also cause consumers inside Russia to lose some confidence in the ruble. Of course, actual counterfeiting is feasible internationally, and such a threat in tandem with sanctions, would offset Russia being able to both prop up the ruble and subvert the impact of sanctions by threatening to sell their oil for rubles. Ukraine can apply deterrence to Russian aggression by threatening to upscale their international ruble counterfeiting operations, and depending on Russia's insistence on continued attacks on Ukrainian civilians, Ukraine can go further and threaten to use its contacts inside Russia to inject fake undetectable counterfeit rubles into the Russian economy via eastern

Ukraine, thereby crippling the economic market and potentially contributing to the Russian public becoming more unsatisfied with the Kremlin about the impact the war in Ukraine is having on the economy. Just the mere threat of counterfeiting alone will cause people to lose confidence in the ruble. And actual cases of ruble counterfeiting being uncovered will further cause the value of the ruble to drop because all that does is create more alarm, thus making it to where Russia bringing light to such operations publicly actually works even more against their own currency. This ends up becoming a massive conundrum. Russia would also have to spend considerable resources to crack down on counterfeiting, which means re-allocating law enforcement personnel, shifting them from other assignments and spending money on equipment that could detect counterfeit currency. Of course, Russia can apply a workaround that involves legalizing bitcoin for international transactions only. In September of 2022, this is exactly what they did, allowing bitcoin to be used for cross border transactions. This will have a way of propping up the ruble by creating an artificial demand. Russia, for example, after selling oil for bitcoin, can simply then sell the bitcoin for rubles. In retrospect, bitcoin played a role in keeping the ruble afloat after initial sanctions were applied on Russia by the west. Reason being, is because family members of Russian people were only able to use bitcoin to send money home to family members living in Russia. As a consequence, those bitcoins were then liquidated for rubles, as rubles, since the invasion, is the only currency Russian citizens are permitted to use. Russia by making Bitcoin legal for international transactions not only helps them evade sanctions but also helps them apply a mechanism for increasing the value of the ruble. And this is actually why many countries are hesitant to ban bitcoin altogether. The west has tried to counter this by attempting to persuade bitcoin exchanges to ban Russians from using the platform. This was to no avail as pretty much all the exchanges refused to do so. As far countering a counterfeiting operation aimed at destroying the ruble, it would take a very significant amount of bitcoin to achieve the task. Furthermore, counterfeiting may also likely be weaponized by the US in order to keep nations from evading sanctions with the use of cryptocurrency.

Some studies show that counterfeiting has a minimal effect on inflation, especially when the cost of counterfeiting is high, presuming that the one carrying out the counterfeiting task is being paid in the currency he is counterfeiting. But if the counterfeiting is occurring abroad and the cost of it is either low or being paid in some other means of value, this offsetting factor would not apply to the nation where all the counterfeit currency is being injected. Economists, however, would insist that Russia could counter this by encouraging people to use electronic means for purchases, however,

people in fear of having counterfeit rubles would also be afraid of depositing them into banks. Russia and China have offered to sell some of their commodities in Bitcoin as a way to evade sanctions. And Russia has been flirting with the idea of putting the Ruble on the gold standard in order to mitigate the dangers of high inflation. However, excess fake Rubles circulating the financial system abroad could lead to the same dynamic that caused the US to leave the gold standard back in 1971—not having enough gold to exchange for all the foreign held currency, should much of the fake rubles remain undetected.

So once again, this is why Zelenskyy remaining in power in Ukraine is imperative for Ukraine because of his ability to garner the support of the international community. If Ukraine does orchestrate a ruble counterfeiting operation abroad, the cost of production could be denominated in Ukraine's currency, which would prop up the Ukrainian economy at the same time. Now with this in effect, the ruble's value becomes couched to the mercy of any statement coming out of Kyiv about attempts to counterfeit. Kyiv can use such a factor in negotiations and decide to scale back threats of counterfeiting activities in exchange for whatever demands Ukraine deems appropriate to make upon Russia. The power of this method could reduce Ukraine having to use military means to deter the Russian occupation. In this, they reduce the casualties caused by their own forces in trying to reclaim territory, and are also able to conduct a defensive activity that is not considered a war crime. The Nazis tried this counterfeiting method in World War II against England, printing counterfeit British notes and planning to air drop them into England in the hopes of crippling the British economy. The Nazis assumed that while honest British citizens would take the counterfeit money off the ground and report it to the authorities, other unscrupulous types like criminals would be more likely to take advantage of the commercial opportunity that the counterfeit money could provide if it could be exchanged without evoking suspicion. Such, if enough people in England decided to use the fake notes for commerce, would have devastated England's economy and left them unable to pay for and sustain their military apparatus in World War II. However, the Nazis never got around to implementing this plan, but did print a large amount of British notes and later decided to use the notes to bank roll the war machine by purchasing materials with the counterfeits. The advantage the Nazis had in printing the fake notes came from their ability to use the free labor of skilled workers detained in concentration camps. With Ukraine, the situation is more advantageous than it was for the Nazis due to the fact that Ukraine could solicit foreign help in making the counterfeiting of the ruble an international operation. But this would only be possible with Zelenskyy at the helm, since he is able to garner an appeal at the international level. This operation combined with sanctions would

cripple the Russian economy and keep them from funding the war effort against Ukraine. It would also put the value of the ruble at the mercy of statements coming from Kyiv. As stated before, just the threat of counterfeiting alone can rattle an economy. Another power play that Zelenskyy can take advantage of is Ukraine's role in maintaining the power of the US dollar. The value of the US dollar goes back to the petrodollar agreement established between Saudi Arabia and the United States, which is an agreement in which the US would agree to defend Saudi Arabia militarily if Saudi Arabia and OPEC nations sell their oil for US Dollars. This agreement has held steady since 1973 and was demonstrated in real time when the United States military was deployed to Iraq in the early 1990s to defend Saudi Arabia against Iraq aggression. However, the United States in the subsequent years, have demonstrated an ability to make commitments to nations militarily and then back out of them when pressures at home became too heavy to bear. This was the case in Afghanistan when in 2021, after a 20 years occupation, the US decided to pull out of the country, leaving the Afghan Security forces at the mercy of the re-surging Taliban army. This also happened in Libya and Syria when NATO forces instigated unrest in both countries, made overtures to the separatist forces, before ultimately leaving them to their fate. Libya has yet to recover and is now marred by continuous fighting between various militia groups vying for control of the region. In Syria, the US backed the Kurdish forces against ISIS, whom had been gaining territory in Syria since 2014. However, in 2017, the US suddenly pulled their troops out of Syria and left the Kurdish militants defenseless against Turkish powers seeking to eliminate them from the Syrian-Turkish border. The examples of Afghanistan, Syria and Libya represent abandonment of allies in rapid succession. Ukraine had nearly met this same fate of being abandoned by the United States when the Russian forces invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Just prior to the war, the United States made very strong overtures to Ukraine, telling them that they would respond swiftly and decisively if Russian invaded Ukraine. But just 24 hours into the war Zelenskyy would state that the west had abandoned them. But thanks to Zelenskyy persistence, the west and the United States finally came around to getting weapons into Ukraine. While they never supplied the fighter jets that Ukraine had been requesting, they did provide billions of dollars in lethal aid that would give Ukraine more ability to resist the Russian military advances throughout the country. Because the US has been committed to Ukraine winning the war and has promised to do whatever it takes to help Ukraine achieve victory, they thus have kept at bay the implication of what would have occurred had they abandoned Ukraine to its own devices after goading them to join NATO and then promising to act swiftly and decisively against Russia

if Russia invaded. If the US did decide to abandon Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the US dollar would have been in serious jeopardy because the US's main allies would have been on high alert regarding the merit of the US's commitment to its allies abroad. We saw that shortly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine along with the trepidation applied by the US towards providing aid to Ukraine, Saudi Arabia did something unprecedented. They actually considered selling their oil to China for Chinese Yuan instead of US dollars. This alarmed many US economists and there were numerous reports about the severe economic implications of the Saudi Arabia ditching the US dollar. One can say that the US's engagement with Ukraine is a form of penance for having abandoned many of its previous allies, such that if this engagement with Ukraine leads to a Ukrainian victory, the rest of the United State's most critical allies may be able to reassert trust in US military commitment, which would then keep the dollar afloat since its value is based on US commitment to foreign military intervention. But if the US at any point tries to put on the brakes and withdraw aid from Ukraine without leading Ukraine to reclaiming the Russian-occupied territories, then Ukraine could threaten to announce US withdrawal of critical aid as a betrayal and abandonment of Ukraine by the US military industrial complex. This scenario would place US alliances in jeopardy and could threaten the stability and power of the US dollar, should Saudi Arabia no longer trust the US military as a pertinent ally. Zelenskyy knows this. With this leverage combined with the aforementioned leverage concerning counterfeiting the ruble, Vlodymyr Zelenskyy could wield a level of power that the world has not seen for quite some time, having the economic stability of both superpowers at the mercy of his command.

Chapter 9: Using Critical Race Theory to Reclaim the DPR/LPR

Russia's use of media, which was improved considerably during the Second Chechen war, worked out in their favor again during their invasion of Ukraine. Russia managed to bring in western journalists to cover their side of the story at a time when the general public in the west, particularly in the United States, had begun, for some time, to lose faith in the mainstream media, causing many Americans to mistrust what was being said about the war in mainstream outlets. This brings to light another factor that one has to watch for during a conflict—if national media outlets of another country are willing to back the official narrative presented by one of the involved parties in the conflict, does the general public in that other country have an overall good assessment or perception of what is being reported by their mainstream media. While the US got fully behind what Ukraine wanted to control as far as information, the political climate in the US was such that information presented by the mainstream media there would predictably be met with suspicion by a significant sector of the American public due to the domestic political leanings attached to every topic in the news. This then causes many in the public to seek alternative sources of information to see if there is or isn't a connection to what the mainstream media is pushing as far as the narrative is concerned. In the case of Ukraine and Russia, many Americans were able to find alternative sources of information from fellow westerners actually covering what is happening on the Russian and Russian-backed side of the conflict. And at times, some of this information didn't align with some components of the mainstream narrative. Obviously this dynamic worked in favor of Russia because it created enough skepticism in the west that many who ventured away from the mainstream narrative applied by the west were ultimately sucked into following the official mainstream narratives of the Russian side, i.e. that the Bucha massacre was staged and that Ukraine was comprised entirely of Nazis. Ultimately when most people shift to the middle, they often end up going to the other extreme without realizing it. In order to circumvent a total shift in western perception against Ukraine, Ukraine will have to avoid rhetoric that could later be used against them in the event of a major attack. Apparently the CIA/NATO is hosting an enemies of Ukraine list at a website called myrotvorets.center. This site doxxes people it has concluded to be enemies of Ukraine. It even has American citizens on it who are advocating for a negotiated settlement. Oliver Stone and Noam Chomsky are on it for their comments about Ukraine. Recently added was Roger Waters of Pink Floyd. They are being accused of being accomplices of the Russian invasion. However, none of them encouraged Russia to invade Ukraine. But because of this list, they become strategic targets. Not only for Ukrainian extremist if they

want to silence someone, but also for Russia because if something happens to westerners on the list, many in the west will first point the finger at the website and could withdraw support for Ukraine irrespective of who or what is responsible for their deaths, should something tragic happen. Even more ominously, westerners may start outright supporting Russia's invasion of the country, which would be very bad for Ukraine geopolitically. Some of the people on that list have already been killed. Darya Dugina, the daughter of Alexandr Dugin—a Russian philosopher, had been on the list for her journalism and after she was killed in a car bombing, her picture on the website was covered with the word "liquidated" written across her face. It must be said that a major strategy for Ukraine to win will be in their ability to keep the enemy from implicating them in anything that could be used to justify a second military offensive against Kyiv. Russia will fight militarily for as long as their public allows them to and if they can convince the public and the west that Ukraine is a threat to their own national security, then Russia will have all it needs to carry out a full scale second offensive against Kyiv that could leave all of Ukraine under Russian occupation. This dynamic is exactly how Russia was able to win the second Chechen war. Zelenskyy's early strategy of appealing to Russian speakers was very effective in presenting to the public that Ukraine has no intentions inside of Russia. Continuing down this path could help Ukraine stave off a second Russian offensive, even before it starts.

And here is the power vacuum that is currently in place in Donetsk and Luhansk. While the leaders of the DPR and LPR have announced for a future referendum to take place, allowing the people in those cities to vote on whether or not to have the DPR or LPR join the Russian Federation, Zelenskyy must still nonetheless remain prudent in not allowing Ukraine to recognize the Russian speakers in those eastern areas as "Russian," since it is the case that doing so will only make it easier for them to discount themselves as being ethnically Ukrainian. Because of this aspect, Ukraine must take advantage of the opportunity denominate exactly what a Russian-speaking Ukrainian citizen should be. Or at the very least, allow the Russian-speakers to decide for themselves what they want to identify as. If it becomes evident that many in the DPR and LPR decide not to identify as either, then that demographic will end up falling outside of the bounds of what Russia considers to be inside their jurisdiction. Russia is under the understanding that the Russian speakers in Ukraine identify as Russian, which is why Russia has provided passports and military aid to the Russian-speaking regions. So if any demographic arises in the DPR and LPR that chooses not to identify as either Ukrainian or Russian, then they will be outside of the framework of Russia's backing, which would leave that new neutral demographic without any backing whatsoever. Thus there is a void

there that Ukraine can fill, offering to recognize these racially ambiguous members of the eastern Russian occupied areas as ethnically neutral. If anyone from that mode of thinking is embedded within the DPR or LPR leadership, then Ukraine may have a pathway of bringing the east back into its sphere of influence and away from Russia by splitting the DPR and LPR government into two factions. Clearly, the racially ambiguous Russian speakers will insist on the DPR and LPR remaining autonomous, while the rest will insist on joining the Russian Federation. Ukraine can foment this potential schism by having the UNA-UNSO get in contact with its Russian counterparts inside Russia and have them travel to the DPR and LPR for the purposes of intensifying the disagreement to the point where officials in the DPR and LPR consider reaching out to Kyiv. Those Russians that would travel to eastern Ukraine would operate on behalf of the side of the argument that wants to join the Russian Federation, perhaps helping to apply rhetoric that further alienates the racially ambiguous citizens of the DPR and LPR from ever considering joining the Russian Federation. This is done as to not evoke suspicion of working for Kyiv. The intensity of disagreement between racially ambiguous Russian-speakers supporting autonomy and Russian-identifying Russian speakers supporting joining the Russian Federation will correlate with the chances of Ukraine being invited to intervene on behalf of the racially ambiguous Russian speakers. If Russia attempts to keep things calm in eastern Ukraine, Ukraine could nonetheless still get involved by surreptitiously supporting the racially ambiguous Russian speakers during DPR and LPR elections without giving off the impression of recognizing the legitimacy of the DPR/LPR autonomy. This keeps the administration in Kyiv from evoking contempt from the staunch Ukrainian nationalists, and at the same time, keeps them involved and influential as to what is going on within their internationally recognized territories. This demographic of racially ambiguous Russian-speakers, if political tensions escalate, will only be able to seek refuge from radical Russophilia by leaning to the west towards Kyiv. If things continue to escalate between them and Russian-identifying Russian speakers, perhaps leading to Russian troops becoming aggressive towards racially ambiguous Russian speakers, Kyiv could be called in to protect the racially ambiguous Russian speakers from Russian aggression. This is something that Russia does not want, and at the same time if Russia starts attacking racially ambiguous Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine, it could create a rift inside Russia since it is likely that many Russian liberals inside of Russia might also identify as racially ambiguous. So all in all, if Zelenskyy can help with rhetoric that affirms the identity of racially ambiguous Russian speakers in the eastern Ukraine, such will lower the chances of parts of eastern Ukraine becoming part of the Russian

Federation. If hostilities start to unfold between racially ambiguous Russian speakers and Russian-identifying Russian speakers, then such would increase the chances of Ukraine being able to re-access the occupied territories. Russia does not want this. Furthermore, when it comes to being able to re-align Russian speakers with Kyiv, Zelenskyy can make this a reality by holding polls in western Ukraine about their willingness to accommodate racially ambiguous Russian-speakers. If those racially ambiguous types feel that Ukraine is more willing to protect their ambiguity, then many in the DPR/LPR will slowly start to side more so with Kyiv than with Moscow. The key here is Zelenskyy seeing the identity crisis in the eastern Ukraine and then finding a way remedy the situation by giving them a name and a face. Zelenskyy may also have to give some concessions to the Russian language in the west, and if this is done for the sake of unifying Ukrainian land, then he should have no problem in convincing his political opposition of the necessity to do so. The bottom line is that in order for Ukraine to recapture its internationally recognized borders, they have to be able to develop some semblance of fundamental kinship with the inhabitants there. At the moment, this is only possible by taking advantage of a power vacuum left by the potential of non-Russian identifying Russian speakers becoming alienated from both those Russian speakers that identify as Russian and also from Moscow. What is interesting is that Zelenskyy himself would fall under this new category of being racially ambiguous and would therefore have an easier time of connecting with this new ethnotype in eastern Ukraine. Now Ukraine can point to the history of Ukraine since 1991 and point out that the racially ambiguous peoples of eastern Ukraine were always a part of Ukraine, and Zelenskyy can point to himself as an example of how Ukraine had always been willing to accommodate the racially ambiguous Russian speakers. Obviously, there should be a line drawn. Ukraine should protect the Ukrainian language in some levels of society. Now trying to reintegrate the Russian speakers of the east and south back into the west of Ukraine would take some time, considering the fact that a war has just taken place, one of which the Russian military was basically called in by pro-Russian separatists of eastern Ukraine to invade all of Ukraine and kill as many Ukrainians as possible. Consequently, Ukrainians will not forget this for years to come. At this time, just hearing the Russian language could be traumatizing for Ukrainians, and for this reason it will be hard to reintegrate Russian speakers back into the whole of Ukraine in the short term. Still and all, in order for Ukraine to turn the Russian speakers against the Russian occupiers, Ukraine would have to find a way to show that there is more of a link between the Russian speakers of the east Ukraine and Ukrainians, than that of Russian speakers of the east and Russians. The best median to tread would be acknowledging the eastern

Ukrainians who speak Russian as being ethnically ambiguous and culturally distinct from both Russia and Ukraine, but at the same time better off remaining politically leaned in the direction of Ukraine. However, even this is a hard task since much of eastern Ukraine has been dealing with shelling from the Ukrainian side since 2014, which gave the separatist all the leg room they needed to convince the Russian speakers that Kyiv was in fact their enemy, irregardless of the fact that the pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine are more responsible for the overall carnage of the war than NATO, since it was them who tried to impose secession in the eastern part of Ukraine even when it was clear that the Russian speaking citizens did not want that outcome. These are pressing issues that get in the way of Ukraine being able to re-occupy their own internationally recognized territories, but it is possible. The events concurrently taking place in Iraq could be a prelude to what transpires in the breakaway regions in the DPR and LPR. In Iraq since the US invasion in 2003, the country has encountered significant political instability, led by al-Sadr, who was once considered enemy number 1 by US forces following their invasion of Iraq. Al Sadr's rise originates from his role during the Iraq insurgency in 2004 as the leader of the Shiite Mahdi army. Following the US invasion, the Iraqi insurgency actually comprised of both Sunni fighters loyal to Saddam Hussein whom had just been overthrown by the invasion, and also of Shia fighters largely embedded within al Sadr's Mahdi Army. Those Shia fighters were supported and later provided refuge by Iran after having fought with the Mahdi Army that resisted the US occupation. Al Sadr was largely against the presence of foreign troops on Iraqi soil, and as a Shiite, Iran was able to express solidarity with Al Sadr's goals at that time. While, on the other hand, the Sunni fighters were largely embedded with Al Qaeda. While both Sunnis and Shias resisted US occupation, there was no collaboration between the two groups during the insurgency. In fact, only a few years after the insurgency began, the Mahdi Army and Al Sadr had become instrumental in disenfranchising the Sunni minorities in Iraq. Once the new western backed Shia government began to take hold of Iraq after the US scaled back its military operations, the Sunni minorities began to protest throughout the country against what they considered to be sectarian policies that were aimed against the Sunni demographic. The US had already warned the new Iraqi government to avoid the temptation of implementing policies that would alienate the Sunni minority and create a power vacuum that would allow an insurgency to re-surge. As predicted, ISIS was able to take advantage of the unrest and recruit from within the local Sunni organizations and protester movements, before carrying out a militant course of action that would lead to ISIS reclaiming various territories inside of Iraq. If we try to apply how this would work analogously with Ukraine, we get stuck on how the

factor which gave ISIS the advantage to reclaim territory is not readily apparent in the situation concerning Ukraine. This, due to the fact, that most ethnic Ukrainian have likely been eradicated from the pro-Russian separatist regions, and perhaps purposely for that very reason of preventing internal unrest that would create a power vacuum and potential resurgence of Ukrainian resistance inside the eastern territories. Earlier, it was mentioned that a workaround for Ukraine in this regard would be recruiting operatives from inside Russia to travel to eastern Ukraine for the purpose of sowing division between those who want to remain autonomous and those who want to join the Russian Federation, creating enough of a rift that would lead to the side that wants to remain autonomous leaning politically in the direction of Kyiv. Meanwhile, Russia would be at a standstill, not knowing how to approach a situation where they may have to side against Russian speakers. For this reason, as to not upset domestic balance within their own country, Russia would remain apprehensive about getting involved. Even the Russian troops left inside the eastern breakaway regions would have to show restraint. Now if we look back at the situation in Iraq with the resurgence of ISIS in 2014, we notice that correspondingly, Iran was able to take advantage of the power vacuum and become more involved in Iraqi politics by backing organizations that aimed to fight against ISIS. At this time al Sadr was instrumental organizing unites for the purpose of protecting Shiite cultural sites from ISIS. What was once the Mahdi Army had become the Peace Brigades. Because of the threat of ISIS, Iran and most Iraqi Shiites were in solidarity. But after the threat of ISIS had been neutralized by 2019, it was clear that al Sadr's movement against foreign influence was not restricted simply to the United States or Sunni extremism. It was also aimed at Iran, and the last recent years of unrest in Iraq involves internal strife and violence within the Shiite sect. Al Sadr's movement against Iran is comprised of secularists, Sunnis, and Shiites, all of whom are against the foothold that Iran has gained in Iraqi politics. Iran essentially took advantage of the power vacuum created by the rise of ISIS which kept the Shiite sects dependent on Iranian support in fending off the extremist Sunni militant group. An Iran funded political organization had even managed to gain the majority of seats in Iraq's parliament, a state of affairs that was opposed by al Sadr and his movement. Later in 2021, al Sadr's movement had managed to counter Iranian influence in Iraqi politics by gaining the majority of seats in Iraq's parliament but after being unable to form a government, al Sadr withdrew his bloc from the Iraqi parliament, allowing the Iran backed political party to reclaim the majority of seats. So all in all, one can say right now as of 2022, another power vacuum has been established in Iraq. There are secularist, Sunni and Shiite members making up al Sadr's group, while the rest of the Shiite sects in Iraq are backed by Iran. The

question in this case is, could ISIS take advantage here and latch onto al Sadr's movement against Iran since both now share a common political enemy. The reason this is possible is because while ISIS upholds an extremist form of Sunni Islam that considers Shia Islam a form of heresy, much of the reason for their ability to recruit often goes beyond the religious factor. Much of it has to do with the political backdrop. ISIS had more of a connection with the Sunnis in Iraq than the Sunnis in Syria. In Iraq, there was a commonality between Sunnis and ISIS regarding the impact of being disenfranchised by the Shiite governing apparatus there, hence ISIS could express solidarity and thus recruit Sunnis to their cause of liberation. In Syria, this dynamic was not present, hence why so many Sunnis were largely repulsed by the militant group. Another factor that allows ISIS to recruit is due to the economic circumstances, where people are willing to join in exchange for resources and money that is not available to them in their current situation. For Ukraine to be able to infiltrate back into its internationally recognized territories, they would have find a way to express some measure of solidarity with Russian speakers in the east who want to remain autonomous. We can look back the example of the UNA-UNSO fighting in Tranistria back in the 1990s on behalf of protecting the Ethnic Ukrainians against the Moldovan government. It has been noted that at the same time, the UNA-UNSO had unwittingly fought alongside the pro-Russian separatists there who were also fighting against the Moldovan government, and there may have been some collaboration. So when it comes to factors that divide people, in many cases these factors can be overridden by having a common enemy, as we see in the case of Ukrainian nationalists fighting alongside the pro-Russian separatists in Moldova. A real-time example in Ukraine of how this strategy would work can be seen in the Kherson. Ukraine launched a counteroffensive aimed at recapturing Kherson from the Russian forces. President Zelenskyy of Ukraine made it his goal to reclaim Kherson before the winter. Just prior to the offensive, Ukraine was able to acquire HIMARS rocket systems from the United States, which allowed Ukraine to attack the bridges that connected Kherson to the east of Ukraine and to Crimea. Destroying these bridges leaves Russian military personnel stranded west of the Dnipro river and cut off from its supply routes, and at the same time vulnerable to Ukrainian artillery strikes. One of the key strategies of Ukraine's counteroffensive into Kherson in late August of 2022 was to get Russian forces further away from their supply lines. In theory after destroying the bridges over the Dnieper river, Ukraine would trap Russian forces west of Dnieper and leave them vulnerable to Ukrainian artillery with nowhere to retreat. The bridges that separate Ukraine along the Dnieper river are a logistical nightmare for the Russian occupation and keeps them hesitant to consolidate further west. Furthermore, Kherson is important

because of the access it provides to other parts of eastern Ukraine. The Russians being able to capture Kherson at the start of the war, allowed them to seize more territories such as Mariupol, Zaporizhia, Dnipro and Mykolaiv. If they repel the Ukrainian counter-offensive, Russia will have the ability to launch attacks on other eastern Ukrainian cities such as Odessa, which would allow them to capture Ukraine's major ports and pave the way for Russian forces to develop a land bridge to Transnistria, which would then place the Moldovan government under Russia's sphere of influence. One factor that may have impeded the strategic prowess of Ukraine's plan to retake Kherson was the fact that someone inside the Ukrainian SBU may have handed over a map of the minefields to the Russian forces, which thus permitted Russia to claim Kherson very quickly at the outset of the war. Kherson is very close to Crimea where Russia has had a strong military presence since 2014 when they annexed it from Ukraine after a referendum. Since then, the Russian military had remained a threat to the region. And thus before the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, Ukraine had vigorously prepared Kherson to be strongly defended from a Russian advance. Zelenskyy himself personally visited Kherson on February 12, 2022 to oversee the military drills taking place there. In retrospect, had Ukraine been able to successfully defend Kherson, it would have had a ripple effect of Ukraine being able to stave off Russian aggression in other parts of eastern Ukraine. However, when a traitor within Ukrainian ranks revealed a map of mine fields to the Russian army, Russia was able to capture Kherson in a matter of hours. Obviously, dealing with collaborators will be the main key in Ukraine being able to recapture its internationally recognized territories from the Russians. However, after Russia captured Kherson early on in the war, there is still a pro-Ukrainian element there despite the abuse and harassment of pro-Ukrainian activists, journalists and war veterans, all of whose information was stored on hard drives seized by the Russian military after police fled the city on February 24th 2022. Just prior to the invasion, pro-Russian elements inside Kherson were pushing pro-Russian propaganda and setting the stage for Russian forces to be welcomed into the city, and this is a perfect example of Russia taking advantage of a power vacuum left by the cultural rift. While Ukraine has its suspicions on who may have surrendered the city, it remains unclear as to who actually was responsible. Ukraine has been able to take back a few small villages in Kherson, but reports have indicated that Ukraine has incurred heavy losses. Kherson is of strategic importance to the Russian military because it allows clean water to flow into Crimea, a major flash-point during the Russian intervention in Ukraine in 2014. Russia had also accused Ukraine's blocking of the flow of water into Crimea to be a form genocide. The Kremlin has deployed a significant number of men to defend Kherson, many being

young conscripts with no military training whatsoever. If Ukraine is able to reclaim Kherson, they will be in better position to reclaim Crimea and attack the Russian fleet in Sevastopol.

Meanwhile inside Kherson, under Russian occupation, Russia continues to employ non-military strategies that has had a large impact in Russia being able to remain in occupation of the city. Russia has successfully upheld the idea that Russian speakers were being disenfranchised and oppressed by the Ukrainian government in recent years. This aspect is key in getting the population to become satisfied with the new status-quo. In the occupied areas of the eastern Ukraine, the occupation forces is also allotted some freedom as to which methods they use to get the inhabitants to conform to the paradigm that is being implemented. Anyone that evokes suspicion in those areas are often jailed, tortured, abducted, killed or deported. Ethnic cleansing is often the end game of these occupations because it reduces the chances of the type of dissent that could lead to insurgency. Hence why the Russian language and Russian culture is being imposed upon the territories of eastern Ukraine. In the Russian occupied areas, troops are forcing the inhabitants to use rubles for all their commercial activities and salaries, making it mandatory to the point that not doing so could cost someone their entire livelihood. Much of the anti-Ukrainian indoctrination is upheld by a narrative that blames Ukrainians for the suffering of the people of eastern Ukraine. This attempt at unifying the population as one with the occupiers will predict the success of Russia being able to get the citizens of eastern Ukraine to conform to the everyday life that Russia wants them to live. Amid all these factors inside Kherson, there are still partisans there who remain hopeful that the Ukrainian army will liberate the city. These pro-Ukrainians often try to remind the inhabitants of the cities that the Ukrainian army sees their actions and that any actions deemed to be collaboration with the enemy will be punished. While some of the remnant pro-Ukrainians are active in Kherson and are non-violent, there also exists a shadow army that uses violent methods to wear out the occupation, i.e. car bombings and other forms of terror. However, the quicker the Russian occupation forces bring some sense of normalcy to the lives of every day Russian speakers in the eastern Ukraine, the easier it will be for Russia to maintain control over those areas. The rift between Kyiv loyalists and Moscow loyalists is still of benefit to Ukraine. However, the difference between the presence of pro-Ukrainian elements in Kherson and the presence of Sunni militants in Iraq circa 2013 which made it easy for ISIS to go on the offensive and reclaim some parts of Iraq is based on the fact that in Iraq, much of the US forces had already pulled out of Iraq by 2011. Had this not been the case, it would have been harder for ISIS and Sunni militants to lay siege to Mosul, Ramadi or Fallujah. We can anticipate that Russia will likely cleanse

all Ukrainian elements from the occupied territories before withdrawing. Once this happens, it becomes much harder for Ukraine to take advantage of a power vacuum amid any potential political strife that could occur within the eastern Ukrainian territories. If a referendum is applied and Kherson votes itself into the Russian Federation, Russia will be able to justify keeping troops in the region. Ultimately, it becomes very difficult to foresee any power vacuum of which a pro-Ukrainian element would serve the possibility of occupied eastern Ukrainian territories ending back into the hands of Kyiv. Thus, why it's important to implore the possibility of cultivating a critical racial theory that allows those in Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine to identify as racially ambiguous, as opposed to either Ukrainian or Russian. It is hypothesized that those who do identify as racially ambiguous would ultimately become alienated from those who identify as Russian and thus is more solidarity with Ukraine than with Moscow. The key to the effectiveness of such a critical theory being fomented inside occupied territories is if it is also cultivated in the western parts of Ukraine. The only hurdle is the language factor which may draw suspicion from staunch Ukrainian nationalists who are now, as a result of Russian aggression, more likely to be more hostile than ever to Russian culture. Ukrainian nationalists are not necessarily pan East-Slavic nationalists in practice, but on paper they do advocate for the unification of Rus-people but with Kiev as the center, not Moscow. On account of that, a pan east-Slavic nationalism does align with Ukraine's historical backdrop with Kiev being the center of ancient Kievan Rus, the first empire and unification of Rus people. So the development of a critical theory that falls along those points could alter the landscape to the point where there could be some political aspects in occupied territory that could lean in the direction of Kyiv. The aspect of the UNA-UNSO orchestrating for its pro-Ukrainian contacts inside of Russia to enter eastern Ukraine for the sake of fomenting political schism between the pro autonomy factions and the pro-Russia Federation factions should not be seen within the same context of how both Russia and the United States have fomented unrest in other countries for political advantages. Ukraine, in their case of influencing the politics in the breakaway region for geopolitical advantage is not the same as sowing discord politically because in Ukraine's case, the endgame is ultimately for the sake of uniting its internationally recognized country. There is no insidious quality here because essentially the attempt is to unite the country of Ukraine, not divide it. Of course in this regard, we presume that Ukraine nor the international community would recognize the legitimacy of the breakaway states in eastern and southern Ukraine. But if Ukraine does recognize the breakaway states, then there would be an insidious quality that would come with fomenting political unrest there. As long

as this does not become the case, Ukraine should be confident in the operation. Another action against Russia that should not have an insidious quality attached to it is threatening to counterfeit rubles in order to deter Russian aggression. At the moment, Russia has illegally replaced the official Ukrainian currency, the hryvnia, with the ruble on Ukraine's internationally recognized territory in eastern and southern Ukraine. Hence, actions taken by the Ukrainian government to restore its economic status-quo by taking measures to get its citizens in eastern Ukraine to lose confidence in the ruble will have a serious deterrence effect on Russian aggression because counterfeits injected into eastern Ukraine could flow into Russia and rattle the economy. This dynamic actually happened in the early 90s when Ukraine's soft monetary financial policies caused the ruble to lose value which had a ripple effect on Russia's economy when many of those excess rubles in Ukraine ended flowing into Russia. If Ukraine decides to start counterfeiting rubles en masse in western Ukraine and then somehow find a way to inject them into eastern Ukraine, the result of that could have a very negative impact on the ruble especially if some of those rubles flow into Russia. If Ukraine applies the Nazi Germany strategy, they could simply use an attack helicopter to drop billions of rubles into eastern Ukraine and presume that the more unscrupulous types of that region will not report them to the authorities but will use them for commercial activity and thus cause inflation to surge. The dangers of extreme inflation is that it can cause serious economic inequalities, as well as a large wealth gap that could precipitate unrest. In serious cases of inflation, it is always for common for the financially astute members of the population to diversify their investment holdings of other stores of value. The common citizen however is oftentimes not well educated on economics and strategies of preparation in the event of an economic crisis. The wealthy however are often well prepared in the event, and this in many causes can lead to extreme wealth inequality, a dangerous prospect during a major economic catastrophe since the sense of lack especially in relation to others in society is much more acute in that setting. This dynamic has precipitated major revolutions throughout history. Moreover, threats to counterfeit rubles abroad could also make Russia think twice about its ability to remain militarily involved in Ukraine.

Chapter 10: Proven Tactics that Reduce Casualties

When it comes to actual military strategy at dealing with the flat lands that minimize the effectiveness of a Ukrainian counter-attack in Kherson, a work around could simply be Ukraine shelling the open fields relentlessly in order to transfigure it into a terrain that is more conducive to advancement, cover, and consolidation. With the use of drones, it would not be difficult for soldiers situated in the craters to be provided via communication the layout of the land and the locations of nearest craters. The reason this is mentioned is because if one reads testimonies of soldiers who fought on day, one can see how some of the soldiers credited shell craters to be what saved their lives on d-day. First Sergeant Leonard Lomell, United States Army Ranger of the 2nd Ranger Battalion recounted his experience of fighting on d-day:

When I went over the top, I tumbled into a shell crater. There was Captain Gilbert Baugh. He was E Company's commander. He had a .45 in his hand, and a bullet had gone through the back of his hand into the magazine in the grip of the .45. He was in shock and bleeding badly, and there was nothing we could do other than to give him some morphine and say, "Listen. We gotta move it. We're on our way, Captain. We'll send back a medic. You just stay here. You're gonna be all right." It was then that we left the crater where we had gathered together as we came over the cliff. We jumped into a bigger crater, and it held maybe a dozen of our guys. We couldn't get all 22 together in one crater for the move toward 4, 5 and 6 gun emplacements. We hadn't counted on craters being a protection to us. We would have lost more men, but the craters protected us.

This is something Ukraine should consider when it comes to launching counteroffensives in the future in areas comprised of open flat lands—simply shelling open field for the sake of making craters that could protect soldiers in route to occupied territories. However, the shelling would have to be followed by a quick advance and consolidation. This was one of the strategies applied by the Canadian and British forces against the German troops in the battle of Eloi during World War I in 1916. Both the British and German soldiers had been digging tunnels on the battlefield in order to reach the other's trench-lines and blow them up from underground. There were a number of these explosion carried out on the battlefield at the Belgium village of St. Eloi, and they left huge craters that the British army would try to use as cover in order to take over the ridge. The battle would become a battle of securing craters, which the Germans had eventually won. Back then, there was no drone technology that could help ground troops know their location, and because of that

there was much confusion during the battle of St. Eloi as to which craters the enemy forces were located. Soldiers in a battle similar to St. Eloi in modern times could certainly be aided by the use of drone technology that would help them navigate and understand the terrain. The presence of craters in the open fields of Kherson would help Ukrainian forces advance and also take cover. Another strategy that would also apply in this circumstance is how the presence of craters in Kherson would force the Russian forces to consider securing them before the Ukrainian troops would. The presence of craters that could serve as cover for the advancing Ukrainian army places the Russian military in a precarious position—if they advance and attempt to secure the craters, they would thus play into the hands of Ukraine's strategy of stretching Russia's forces further west and trapping them by cutting off access to the bridges over the Dnieper river. On the other hand, if Russia stays back and does not engage on the battlefield, they would be allowing the Ukrainian forces to advance by taking cover in the craters as they move forward. For the terrain to become conducive to a Ukrainian advance into Kherson, Ukraine may have to intensely shell the open fields for months, making it unrecognizable but advantageous for a Ukrainian counteroffensive. Another possibility is conducting serious underground mining operations near Kherson for the purpose of infiltrating further into separatist and Russian occupied areas.

Another strategy that could be applied to creating craters in open fields is the use of mylar space blankets. The Taliban forces in Afghanistan made efficient use of mylar space blankets, which are made up of thin material and are normally designed to treat hypothermia by trapping one's body heat. Many drone systems use thermal cameras to see targets at night via a process that essentially converts a person's body heat (infrared energy) into a visual image. However, because the mylar space blankets are designed to reflect one's body heat back towards the person, the mylar space blankets—if draped around a person—can ultimately prevent a thermal camera from detecting the person's body heat and thus the person. This methodology of evading thermal cameras is only effective at night and in cooler weather. On account of that, the Taliban forces in Afghanistan managed to crawl their way to a US base at the Afghan-Pakistan border and launch surprise attacks there, firing an RPG from the helicopter landing zone, before disappearing back into the night draping their mylar blankets over them and crawling back to safety. The Apache helicopters that patrolled the surrounding areas could not locate the Taliban fighters as they encroached the base. Furthermore, this is certainly a tactic that Ukraine could use to get closer to Russian bases that are situated west of the Dnieper. Something else that could be of use is the pdf that Al-Qaeda

commander Abdallah bin Muhammad published in 2011, containing 22 tips on how to evade or stop drones:

It is possible to know the intention and the mission of the drone by using the Russianmade "sky grabber" device to infiltrate the drone's waves and the frequencies. The device is available in the market for \$2,595 and the one who operates it should be a computer know-how.

Using devices that broadcast frequencies or pack of frequencies to disconnect the contacts and confuse the frequencies used to control the drone. The Mujahideen have had successful experiments using the Russian-made "Racal."

Spreading the reflective pieces of glass on a car or on the roof of the building.

Placing a group of skilled snipers to hunt the drone, especially the reconnaissance ones because they fly low, about six kilometres or less.

Jamming of and confusing of electronic communication using the ordinary water-lifting dynamo fitted with a 30-metre copper pole.

Jamming of and confusing of electronic communication using old equipment and keeping them 24-hour running because of their strong frequencies and it is possible using simple ideas of deception of equipment to attract the electronic waves devices similar to that used by the Yugoslav army when they used the microwave (oven) in attracting and confusing the Nato missiles fitted with electromagnetic searching devices.

Using general confusion methods and not to use permanent headquarters.

Discovering the presence of a drone through well-placed reconnaissance networks and to warn all the formations to halt any movement in the area.

To hide from being directly or indirectly spotted, especially at night.

To hide under thick trees because they are the best cover against the planes.

To stay in places unlit by the sun such as the shadows of the buildings or the trees.

PeaceMaker

Maintain complete silence of all wireless contacts.

Disembark of vehicles and keep away from them especially when being chased or during combat.

To deceive the drone by entering places of multiple entrances and exits.

Using underground shelters because the missiles fired by these planes are usually of the fragmented anti-personnel and not anti-buildings type.

To avoid gathering in open areas and in urgent cases, use building of multiple doors or exits.

Forming anti-spies groups to look for spies and agents.

Formation of fake gatherings such as using dolls and statutes to be placed outside false ditches to mislead the enemy.

When discovering that a drone is after a car, leave the car immediately and everyone should go in different direction because the planes are unable to get after everyone.

Using natural barricades like forests and caves when there is an urgent need for training or gathering.

In frequently targeted areas, use smoke as cover by burning tires.

As for the leaders or those sought after, they should not use communications equipment because the enemy usually keeps a voice tag through which they can identify the speaking person and then locate him.

Applying other tactics to evade Russian aggression may become more imperative as NATO and US weapons development become unable to keep up with Ukrainian consumption. This was the opinion of US Brigadier General Mark T Kimmitt, who wrote a piece in the Wall Street Journal on September 1st 2022 outlining how US and NATO weapons manufacturing will have a hard time keeping pace with the supply losses accrued on the battlefield. This creates a logistical problem for Ukraine. The article also mentioned that it is possible that Russia may have yet to tap into its own reserves of higher-powered weapons. A number of options were mentioned that could deal with these issues. One was that NATO member states could convince their respective populations that because Russia has been

weakened as a result of using its military resources for Ukraine, NATO member states should not have to worry about the implications of sending to Ukraine weapons from their own stockpiles originally meant to protect the member country. Another option that was explored in the article was the US sending F-16 fighter jets, as well as long range missiles, assuming that doing such would not expand the war further into western Europe. And then finally, it was proposed that Ukraine cut its losses and negotiate a peace deal. This final proposal is likely untenable because Ukraine still believes they have an opportunity to win the war, and because of this, such an option would seem overtly defeatist and such defeatism would be considered unwarranted. However, the fact that the article was even published in western media shows that Ukraine's suppliers are becoming concerned about how the war will affect their armaments stockpiles which are meant strictly for the defense of the NATO member states. Because of the overtures given to Ukraine by NATO and the US just prior to the war, promising that they would protect Ukraine in the event of a Russian invasion makes it to where any withdrawal of US or NATO support could be defined as betrayal. Such would have massive implication, especially for the United States, whose currency's value is based on the trust of foreign nations that the US would intervene militarily on their behalf. Another reason for the timing of the article could be what is brewing between China and the United States over Taiwan. A US conflict with China would prevent the US from being able to sustain the level of weapons supply to Ukraine. When it comes to the potential withdrawal of US aid to Ukraine, Zelenskyy could use the whole US dollar aspect that comes with US commitment abroad and simply threaten to call any withdrawal of US support as a direct betrayal and negative reflection on US moral standing. This would threaten US alliances with critical allies like Saudi Arabia, an alliance which keeps the US dollar afloat, preventing America from collapsing into an economic depression despite the high inflation. Zelenskyy using that angle would deter the US from withdrawing aid at any time in the near future. If Saudi Arabia also views the Ukraine Russia war from that same angle of withdrawal as betrayal, and openly expresses to reassess the petrodollar agreement if such a scenario does arise, it would further deter the US from withdrawing aid to Ukraine. In addition to this as mentioned earlier, if Zelenskyy runs this threat concurrent with threats to counterfeit the Russian ruble, he could kill two birds with one stone. Basically, prevent the US from withdrawing aid and also deter Russian aggression by threatening to dump billions of fake counterfeit rubles into eastern Ukraine, which could trickle into Russia and damage the economy and potentially cause unrest. In this regard, Zelenskyy places Ukraine back in control over the situation within its internationally recognized territories without having to use military aggression. It is certainly possible that both

tactics could lead to continued US funding and a slow Russian withdrawal from eastern and southern Ukraine, depending on the level of impact the counterfeit rubles has on the Russian economy. Of course that is the economic tactic of deterrence. The political tactic would be as mentioned before—having the UNA-UNSO have its contacts from Russia travel to eastern and southern Ukraine to foment a schism between pro-autonomists and those who want to join the Russian Federation. The Russian operatives would join those who want to join the Russian Federation, using rhetoric that would alienate the pro-autonomists from those who wish to become part of Russia, and in doing so causing the pro-autonomists to naturally become more pro-Kyiv. Meanwhile, in western Ukraine, doctrines would be drawn up that would define the Russian-speaker who doesn't identify as Russian to be a racially ambiguous ethnotype but leaned closer to Ukraine. This sows the seeds that Russian-speakers may become more confident of acceptance in the western parts of Ukraine, and at the same time more openly pro-Kyiv in the eastern parts. This tactic would have to coincide with a large scale Russian withdrawal from Ukraine so that Kyiv forces would be given an opportunity by the pro-autonomists to march back into eastern Ukraine and occupy lost territory in a show of force, not requiring any major acts of hostility very much akin to the Taliban reclaiming Afghanistan right as the US pulled its troops out the country. Ukrainian troop presence there would be to uphold the autonomy of the Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine. This basically puts Kyiv back in control over the geography. The idea is to have Ukrainian troops there to back the pro-autonomist militias. Following this arrangement, a deal can be orchestrated in which Ukrainian troops could indefinitely uphold their autonomy or plan to have them reintegrated into Ukraine after a period of time, depending on how the west accommodates Russian speakers.

Militarily, for Ukraine to make advances against Russian aggression, they would have to employ underground operations aimed at altering the landscape of the open fields that are keeping them from encroaching Russian occupied territories. This would require purposely bombing the open fields strictly for the purpose of have craters to take cover in upon advance. The craters should be far enough apart to where Ukrainian soldiers can crawl to and secure each craters at night with mylar blankets draped over them so that they can avoid being seen by the thermal cameras of the surveillance drones and helicopters. The presence of craters themselves being used Ukraine makes it to where Russia would have to stretch its forces in order to secure the craters and keep Ukraine from reaching them. But this also works in favor of Ukraine because it places Russian forces further away from their supply lines and potentially leaves them trapped and vulnerable to Ukrainian artillery. Thus the

open fields become the field of Mars where continued resistance by Ukraine will eventually force Russia to withdraw its forces from there. In fact, we can expect that continued resistance by Ukraine against Russian forces west of the Dnieper river will lead to Russia withdrawing its troops from those areas. With HIMARS added to the picture the aforementioned economic, political, and military gameplan is enough to keep morale high enough in Ukraine and also prevent political in-fighting between the far right and Zelenskyy's political party.

However, when it comes to reclaiming territory east of the Dnieper, Ukraine will have a much harder time achieving this militarily without the numbers and amount of artillery that would have to be deployed nearby. This had already been an issue during the battle of Sievierodonetsk in Luhansk region where Ukrainian forces took considerable losses amid being severely outnumbered by Russian troops and equipment. Once again, we have a case of close proximity to supply lines working in favor of Russia, while distant proximity to supply lines working against Ukraine. In mid-June, the critical battle waged on in Sievierodonetsk in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine. While Sievierodonetsk is located in the Luhansk Oblast, one of the breakaway regions, the city of Sievierodonetsk remained part of Ukraine. However in June, the Russian forces began to surround the city. Both Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk hosted many serious clashes between Ukrainian forces and separatist forces during the war in Donbass back in 2014. Shortly after Russian forces invaded Ukraine in February of 2022, Russian troops immediately began shelling Sievierodonetsk and clashes between Russian and Ukrainian forces erupted all over the city. Ukrainian troops initially repelled the Russian forces from entering Sievierodonetsk, but that would eventually change as Russia would began to overwhelm them with more troops and artillery. As the battle continued, Russian forces managed to gain control over much of the surrounding region in Luhansk, capturing Rubizhne and Popasna, two cities very close to Sievierodonetsk. The Russian troops continued to shell Sievierodonetsk as the Ukrainian continued to resist the Russian advance. Meanwhile, many civilians in the city began to flee, and in April, Russian troops began moving into vacant areas of the Donbass region. Its important to not that for Ukraine to have any success in recapturing territories in the Donbass region, they would have to find a way to cut off the supply lines coming in from the Russian Federation. Look back at history, one example of this being carried out was during the Soviet Invasion of Finland just before World War II. The Red Army greatly outnumbered Finland in manpower and military equipment, but the Finns were able to achieve success early on by dispersing their forces to the border areas, which allowed them to cut off Red Army supplies from Russia and thus win early battles.

At one point, it looked as though Finland would defeat the Soviet Union, but as should have been expected, the Red Army just simply applied more troops and military artillery to the point of overwhelming the Finns.

In Sievierodonetsk, Ukrainian forces began suffering massive casualties as a result of intense fighting, losing around 100 troops a day and imploring western nations to provide more heavy weapons. In early May, both the Russian troops and LPR fighters began securing areas just outside of Sievierodonetsk in an attempt to surround and overpower the Ukrainian forces. The strategy was to take control over all the nearby villages and effectively surround the city and cut off its access to the outside. The Ukrainian holdout, nonetheless, refused to surrender, despite ultimatums from LPR and Russian fighters. Russian forces continued to attack villages surrounding Sievierodonetsk—Rubizhne, Voevodivka, Popasna and Bilohorivka encountered significant Russian fighting, and before long, Russian forces encircled the city. They were then in position to bombard it relentlessly after the LPR defeated the Ukrainian forces in the battle of Rubizhne. Russia subsequently halted the ground advance and strictly resorted to artillery strikes on both Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk. While the Russian forces were largely staved off in the north, they were able to make gains south of the city. In late May, Russian forces began a ground assault and tried to make their way further into Sievierodonetsk and break off into multiple pockets within the city. In the west, the supply lines were being destroyed by Russian artillery. The Russian troops made minor advances on May 28th, but by this time both sides of the conflict were suffering heavy casualties. Russia did not want to overextend its commitment to add reinforcements to the region, and at this time reinforcing LPR fighters was proving to be very difficult. The next day, fighting erupted in the middle of Sievierodonetsk as some Russian troops were able to breach Ukrainian resistance at the outskirts. Shortly thereafter, Russia gained control over 80% of the city, causing many Ukrainian troops to retreat and prepare for a counteroffensive. At the start of June, Russian artillery struck a nitric acid tank at the Azot chemical plant, where roughly 800 civilians had been hiding in bomb shelters underneath. Despite the Russian advance into the city centre, Ukrainian troops managed to kill 200 Russian soldiers and regain some of the lost territory in Sievierodonetsk after launching a counter offensive on June 3rd. Many of Ukraine's foreign fighters were also active in the city. Despite the newfound momentum, Russia had cut off supply lines, blowing up bridges that lead into the city, making it difficult for Ukrainian troops to access deliveries of food and medicine into Sievierodonetsk. Russia has this advantage, being consolidated east—they can cut the flow of aid coming from the west. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Ministry of

Defense accused Russia of putting its non-Russian military personnel in danger for the sake of minimizing casualties within the Russian army. The governor of Luhansk, Serhiy Haidai, was confounded by the sheer size of the Russian military arsenal in terms of troops and equipment. President Zelenskyy repeated the same sentiments, despite vowing that Ukrainian troops will continue resisting. Yet no one was certain as to who was controlling what, in and around the city, but Ukrainian officials continued to remain steadfast, ensuring everyone that Ukrainian forces would continue to hold out. This was amid Russian reports that Ukrainian forces were depleted of critical supplies and troops. A short while later, the Luhansk governor would admit that Ukrainian forces had been pushed back as a result of Russian shelling, leaving 800 civilians trapped in the Azot chemical factory. By June 9th, the Russian forces would have control over 90% of the city. Ukrainian forces attempted to lure Russian forces into an urban combat scenario, which is Russia's weakness. But the lack of influx of weapons and other equipment left Ukrainian forces stagnant. The urban fighting continued and casualties continued to mount on both sides, but Ukrainian officials were admitting that they were taking heavy losses and that Russia was in control over much of Sievierodonetsk. Ukrainian officials also continued to reiterate that the Russians had a significant advantage of manpower and artillery and pleaded with the west to send more heavy weapons. The LPR officials later accused Ukraine of launching strikes from the Azot plant, potentially using the civilians there as human shields. On June 13th, the last remaining bridges attaching Sievierodonetsk to other parts of Luhansk had been destroyed by Russian forces and left Ukrainian forces indefinitely stranded inside the city with no supply lines or escape routes. It was clear that Ukrainian forces being so far away from its supply lines in western Ukraine left them unable to resist the Russian onslaught in Sievierodonetsk. Up to this point, the carnage and death in Sievierodonetsk had become so significant that Ukrainian officials stopped counting casualties. But much like other parts of Ukraine, there were reports of Russian shelling of soft targets like schools and churches, as well as humanitarian centers. The mayor as of late May said that roughly 1500 civilians were killed in Sievierodonetsk since the beginning of the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022. On June 25, 2022, the Russian forces took full control of Sievierodonetsk, forcing Ukrainian forces to retreat and seek higher ground in Lysychansk in a move which allows Ukraine to prepare for a future counter-assault. This was the largest setback for Ukrainian forces. However, Ukrainian officials insist that the withdrawal was strictly tactical, and that the newly arrived HIMARS rocket systems will allow Ukraine to strike targets in Russian-occupied areas of the country, making it possible for Ukrainian forces to recapture lost territories. But unfortunately within a few days,

Lysychansk would fall to the Russians. However, the arrival of the HIMARS weapons will allow Ukraine to apply their own strategy of destroying bridges and cutting off Russian supply lines that bring in weapons from east of the Dnieper. If Ukraine attempts to return to the east of Ukraine, they would have to use the HIMARS to attack the Izvaryne border crossing which allows supplies to flow into eastern Ukraine from Russia.

One strategy that Ukraine has to remain vigilant about has to do with the timing of Russia's withdrawal of troops from eastern Ukraine. This aspect was vital to ISIS reclaiming parts of Iraq in 2014 and also for the Taliban resurgence which took place after 2014. In fact, the Taliban's strategy was very deliberate. Between 2011 and 2014, US and NATO announced the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and attempted to transfer control and the security situation over to the Afghan security forces. Meanwhile, during this time, the Taliban decided to give off the impression that their capabilities were largely weakened and therefore no threat to the new US-backed Afghan governance. The reason the Taliban applied this approach was to help facilitate the withdrawal since US NATO withdrawal was predicated on the idea that the Taliban would no longer be a threat. Likewise, in Ukraine if other tactics fail to persuade Russia to withdraw, Russia will eventually announce a withdrawal of most of its forces within 2 years, likely leaving some Russian forces in the region but also transferring control over to local separatist forces. The period of time between Russia's announced withdrawal and their actual withdrawal would have to coincide with Ukraine fomenting political infighting in the separatist-held territories over the status of the region, and setting the stage for the pro-autonomy factions in the separatist-held territories to help facilitate a quick Ukrainian surge into the area just following the Russian withdrawal of most of its forces. The idea is that a critical race theory that cements the identity of Russian-speakers in Ukraine as racially ambiguous will weaken their will to continue fighting for a cause that they do not resonate with, and for that reason they will be open to negotiating with Kyiv. Also, just like in Afghanistan, the separatist regions will not have the same access to air support that they had throughout the war. This was another factor that helped facilitate the Taliban resurgence and reclaiming of power in Afghanistan—many who served in the Afghan Security service who were low in morale also knew that they would be helpless against the Taliban without NATO/US air support. The same could be said for the separatists. They will likely lose faith in their ability to fend off the Ukrainian forces without the full backing of Russian air support. Now its likely that Russia will keep forces in the separatist regions indefinitely due to their own constitutional factors that justify doing so in territories they designate as independent and sovereign and of

whom they are also allies with. But as Ukraine facilitates political issues within the separatist regions along with doctrines that show that Russian speakers in eastern and southern Ukraine are racially ambiguous, the morale to fight will plummet among separatist fighters, now dealing with an environment that will make them more inclined to defect to the Ukrainian side and help them return to power in the eastern and southern territories. Another overlooked aspect that enabled the Taliban to solicit the help of Afghan Security forces in reclaiming the country was the fact that the average Afghan had more in common with the Taliban than the US or NATO. Many in Afghanistan felt that western identity was being forced upon them. This dynamic is why Ukraine will be able to take advantage of the fact that Russian identity being forced upon Russian speakers in separatist held territories will only cause resentment and hurt morale there. As a result, many Russian speakers will feel more aligned with Ukraine since Ukraine would not be forcing an identity upon them, but simply respecting the ambiguity of Russian speakers in the Donbass and southern Ukraine insist upon. Whereas before, Russian speakers felt more in common with the average Russian, now the Russian speaker in Ukraine will feel more aligned with Kyiv since Kyiv would respect their wishes to remain autonomous.

Another aspect that can pacify enemy fighters is the prospect of better treatment if captured. Russia has taken advantage of this on multiple occasions showing video and testimony of captured soldiers explaining how well their captors have treated them. In Afghanistan, the Taliban would film defectors meeting, shaking hands, and hugging Taliban fighters after being provided safe passage and money to relocate and start anew. There was a strategic element to this. It works to discourage enemy fighter from continuing the fight and it also evokes the temptation to flee into the enemy's hands if the outcome would be more advantageous. Russia has applied this strategy with great efficiency, showing Ukrainian fighters giving a testimony of refusing to be swapped back to the Ukrainian side during prisoner swaps. Things like this have a pacifying effect on enemy soldiers and could tempt them to willfully fall into the enemy's hands. Because corruption has been noted in Ukraine for many years, there is a very high probability that Ukrainian soldiers could fall privy to such temptations. Ukraine must quickly move to apply the same strategy, showing films of Russian soldiers giving testimony to how well their Ukrainian captors are treating them. If Ukraine manages to inflate the ruble in eastern territories, they may be able to pay Russian defectors large sums of US dollars to leave the separatist armies. The Taliban strategy was basically surrender for money, and Ukraine could take advantage of this in a scenario where the economy in the separatist regions could foster the temptation to accept payouts from the other side. The impact of economics/bribery in recapturing

territory cannot be understated and Afghanistan is a shining example of how that methodology can be used to its maximum extent.

These potential power vacuum scenarios are also taking place in Georgia, another country that faced a full-scale Russian invasion. During the Russia war in Ukraine in 2022, South Ossetia contributed troops to help with alongside the Russian army. However, former separatist leader of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoity, accused Russia of using them as cannon fodder. This statement was made right around the time that South Ossetia under Anatoly Bibilov was preparing to initiate a referendum, voting on whether or not to join the Russian Federation. What is interesting was that after a new leader Alan Gagloyev was elected in May of 2022, the referendum was quickly postponed. One can wonder if a political schism is brewing in Georgia over autonomy or joining the Russian Federation and if this disagreement is based on how Russian managed South Ossetia troops helping Russia in Ukraine. The intensity of this quarrel could create a power vacuum that the Georgian government could take advantage of. The conundrum, however, is that any engagement by the Georgian government could be construed as recognition. Here, new terminology has to be denominated which would define engagement without construing it as recognition.

The war between Russian and Ukraine has become a gritty battle of attrition after six months. But since Russia could only slowly adapt to warfare against a resistant Ukrainian forces, the influx of western weapons into Ukraine give confidence to the prospect of an eventual Russian withdrawal. Based on past wars in recent years, one can presume that Russia will be seeking to withdraw its forces from Ukraine in 2024. In the meantime, however, Ukraine will have to remain vigilant of Russia's ability to deplete Ukraine's stockpile of western weapons, as well as their reserve fighters, even with it being the case that defending nations would in most cases have the ability to retain a higher battlefield morale. In this regard, Ukraine has the edge. Along with this, there is also international support which has been predicated on such support being enough for Ukraine to defend itself without it leading to an expanded war. Another factor regarding weapons supplied by the international community pertains to how quickly Ukrainian troops can be trained to use the equipment. This factor has largely played a role in western reluctance to provide f-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, since in the scenario of which the west would approve deployment, there is still the question of Ukrainian troops having the time to learn how to fly the f-16s. Under normal conditions, it would take roughly six months for Ukrainian pilots to learn how to operate the fighter jets, and Ukraine has proposed for the training of pilots to take place immediately, so that when it is approved for fighter jets to be supplied to Ukraine, Ukrainian pilots could immediately be deployed into combat missions with the new

jets. The US has been apprehensive about supplying f-16s, fearing it could escalate and expand the war beyond eastern Europe. Instead, the US has considered offering Ukraine its surplus of A-10 jets, which would be effective in attacking large columns of Russian tanks. The A-10s, however, are much slower than other fighter jets and make them very vulnerable to Russian air defense systems. They are still, however, more powerful than Ukraine's current arsenal of fighter jets which include Soviet Era MIGs and Su-25s, but not as fast, agile or elusive as f16s or f35 fighter jets. The goal of the west in supplying weapons to Ukraine is for the purpose of depleting Russia's military arsenal of weapons. A stalemate would only compel western nations to become concerned about the implication that supplying Ukraine has on their own reserves, which would lead to western countries urging Ukraine to seek out a negotiated settlement with Russia.

Despite the apprehension of western leaders to send weapons that would more significantly change the tide of the war, there are still other aspects that would have to be incorporated into Ukraine's strategy, and these methods include the non-military aspects that have been explained in this book. The use critical race theories, clandestine operations, Ukrainian sympathizers in Russia, power vacuums from political friction, and counterfeiting operations could have a significant impact on raising the prospect of Ukraine reclaiming breakaway areas in the east and south of Ukraine.

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